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"THE TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

The Message of the East

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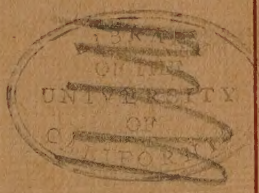

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REPORTS.

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NINTH SEASON—1917

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SUNDAY, 11 A. M.

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"	*14th*	*The Practice of Meditation.*
"	*21st*	*Work as Religion.*
"	*28th*	*Ego and Soul.*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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Let your life be as deep as the ocean, but let it also be as wide as the sky. Take your stand on the one central Truth of religion, the Spirit of man, the immortal, birthless, all-pervading eternal Soul of man, before whose majesty the universe with its galaxy upon galaxy of suns and stars and nebuli is a drop. Every man or woman, nay, every being from the highest Devas to the worm that crawls under your feet, is such a Spirit evolved or involved. The difference is not in kind but in degree. This infinite power of Spirit, brought to bear upon matter evolves material development; made to act upon thought evolves intellectuality; and made to act upon itself makes of man a God.

First let us be Gods and then help others to be Gods. "Be and make." Let this be our motto. Say not that man is a sinner. Tell him that he is a God. Even if there were a Devil, it would be our duty to remember God always and not the Devil. If the room is dark, the constant feeling and repeating of darkness will not take it away, but bring in the light. Let us know that all that is negative, all that is destructive, all that is mere criticism, is bound to pass away; it is the practice, the affirmation, the constructive that is immortal; that will remain forever. Let us say, "We are" and "God is" and "We are God" and march on. Not matter but Spirit.

All that has name and form is subject to all that has none. This is the eternal truth the Scriptures preach. Bring in the light; the darkness will vanish of itself. Manifest the Divinity that is within you. Believe that your Soul is immortal, infinite and all-powerful.

The surface of the sea rises and sinks alternately, but to the observant soul—the child of light—each sinking reveals more and more of the depth, and of the beds of pearls and coral at the bottom. Coming and going is all pure delusion. The Soul never comes nor goes. Where is the place to which it shall go, when all space is in the Soul? When shall be the time for entering and departing, when all time is in the Soul? The earth moves, causing the illusion of the movement of the sun; but the sun does not move. So Maya or Nature is moving, changing, unfolding veil after veil, turning over leaf after leaf of this grand book, while the witnessing Soul drinks in knowledge, unmoved, unchanged. All Souls that ever have been, that are or shall be, are all in the present time, and—to use a material simile—are all standing at one geometrical point. Because the idea of space does not occur in the Soul, therefore all that were ours, are ours and will be ours; are always with us, were always with us, and will be always with us.

Each Soul is a star, and all stars are set in that infinite azure, that eternal sky, the Lord. There is the root, the reality, the real individuality of each and all. Religion began with the search after some of these stars that had passed beyond our horizon, and ended in finding them all in God and ourselves in the same place. Bring forth then the power of Spirit. Call up the Divinity within you. Be great. Proclaim God to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction.

Extract by Swami Vivekananda.

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE AND DEATH.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

There is nothing more vital to human hearts than the question of life and death. Does the soul die? Do we cease to exist with the body? What happens after death to this life of which we are now conscious? This has always been the most absorbing and the most perplexing of problems to the human mind. Ages have gone by. Now and then some one has caught a glimpse of the truth regarding it and has declared it boldly before mankind, yet to every individual it comes afresh. Why? Because this question is only solved by one's own Self-realization. As our hunger cannot be satisfied if someone else eats for us; similarly the knowledge of the Self, which solves this problem, must be gained by each individual for himself. It never comes through others' knowledge or experience. The Sages who have realized immortality, who know what death means, have answered this question; but we can only know that their answer is true by proving it through our own experience. Whoever tastes the nectar becomes immortal; but no one can become immortal by merely hearing about it.

What good, then, do these great men do us, if the solution of this problem is impossible without our own perception? They at least give us the hope that even in this life we can rise above death and gain immortality. We also get much help from them because they show us the way to acquire knowledge of the Soul. But after the path is shown, we must ourselves follow it. We must work with sincerity, faith and earnestness to reach the same state as these Great Ones have attained, that state which is the goal of every human being. The effort must be all our own, and this is the reason why this question rises afresh in every individual mind. Sometimes we may forget it through attachment to the transitory things

of this world; but however we may cling to our external surroundings, sooner or later the problem is bound to come up. Disease, death, misfortune will bring it to the surface of our minds.

Why should the question rise at all? Because man does not want to die. He wants to live, and his clinging to life makes him restless to solve this problem in order to overcome death. Man loves life. And what is this life to which he clings? It is the only thing that exists; the only thing that brings consciousness. Without it no one can move, or talk, or see, or do anything. Material forms have no value, no power independent of this life. It is indeed this life which we love when we say that we love our friends. It is not the material form of the friend that we love, but the life, the vital force, the Soul which dwells within. This is clear, because when the life goes out of the body we no more care for the bodies of those friends whom we loved. This shows that we love, not the material bodies, but the Soul, the Inner Spirit. That Self or Spirit is one without a second, deathless and indestructible.

The idea that the Soul does not die brings a great sense of responsibility. If there is a future life, then it rests with us to make it what we will. We can make it happy or miserable, a life of freedom or of bondage. No man wants to go on eternally through these changes of fortune and misfortune, pleasure and pain, these endless births and deaths. Yet he cannot help it so long as he has the least desire. Hence the Sages teach us to control all desire. The soul is dragged down by these different desires for enjoyment, for wealth and power. But all these conditions are related to the body and we have just seen that the idea we had about ourselves as the body is a delusion. The body dies, but the Self is deathless; the body is limited, but the Self is infinite; the body has form, but the

Self is formless. It has no form of its own. It is "greater than the greatest, and smaller than the smallest." As water has no form, yet it takes different forms in different vessels and again becomes one with the ocean when thrown back into it, so the Soul has no form of its own, but it assumes different forms as it dwells in different bodies; and when it knows its own nature, it becomes one with the Universal Self.

The wise ones realize this through the process of *"Neti, neti"* (not this, not this). They begin with the body and they see that that which has beginning must also have an end, so they know that this cannot be the Self. Then they turn to the mind. They see that the mind is constantly restless and changing, whereas the Self is changeless, therefore it cannot be the Self. So by this process of discrimination they go on until they come to the Self and then they rest satisfied. "The life to which you are clinging you have within yourself," they declare. "You are that. Atman or Soul exists in every living being, but so long as you dwell on the gross material plane, you cannot see it; you will have to go within. There you will find your True Self and you will realize that it is birthless, formless, infinite and eternal."

But you may say: "If my Soul is by its very nature immortal, it does not matter whether I know it or not. If my life is eternal, why should I bother about it?" There is a great difference between having a thing and knowing that we have it. A man may be the possessor of a vast hidden treasure, but if he does not know it he feels poverty stricken and at every moment is in fear of starvation. Although our Soul may be the descendant of that Immortal, Infinite, Eternal Being, yet if we are not conscious of it, we are constantly afraid; our life is full of anxiety and suffering. Knowledge alone will eliminate this suffering. Until we know by our own experience what it means to go beyond death, it is useless to read

about it in the Scriptures or to hear others talk of it. When death comes we are still fearful. Descriptions of immortality will not give us courage or conviction or strength. We must know. Each individual must cultivate the faculty of true discrimination and think for himself. Why should we accept any theory, whether it is set forth in the East or the West? No one can have firm faith in what other people say; each one of us must "prove all things" for himself before he can be convinced of the truth of any religion or philosophy. We may take suggestions from outside; we may listen to those who inspire and stimulate our minds; but we must dispel the veil of darkness through our own effort. When we hear that the Soul is undying in the midst of the dying, unborn and endless, we must ask ourselves what it means. Certainly that is not the definition of this material organism, for like all combinations of matter it must be dissolved sooner or later. There must be something else therefore within us which is ever-living. Shall we then depend upon this perishable physical existence, or shall we seek for that something which cannot be corrupted or destroyed or taken from us? That alone is the source of all real strength and inspiration. Through That only can we transcend our difficulties and limitations.

Also only as we realize our Higher Self are we able to help others. The mortal who believes in his physical nature alone, who is disturbed by heat and cold, pleasure and pain, who is running after name and fame or personal gratification has no time to give to any one else. He is like a hungry man; when food is brought, although someone beside him may be starving, he thinks first of satisfying his own appetite. Nothing makes a man so strong or so self-denying as the knowledge of his Higher Self. It eliminates the impatience and unrest which are killing us, and which make us struggle madly to fulfill our ambitions here and now because we fear we may

miss our only opportunity. It is lack of faith in the eternity of the Soul and the long habit of looking upon existence as a little circle of one life that lie at the root of all selfishness and wrong-doing. When a man awakens to the fact that the few years which he spends in this body represent only a very small fraction of an eternal existence, and that bodily death does not mean the end of a journey, but merely a change of form and environment offering him new opportunities, he will no longer regard death as an enemy; nor will he feel discontented with his present life.

In seeking to gain knowledge of our Soul, however, there is no need to denounce or neglect our body; we are merely to put the proper valuation upon both. We must cherish the Soul as the Soul should be cherished, and we must also treat the body as the body should be treated—as an instrument in the hands of the Soul. Only the one who is able to do this accomplishes the purpose of life. Those who merely follow the whims and appetites of the body miss both the Here and the Hereafter. Do not think, when we are trying to make the most of this life by getting all we can of physical satisfaction and enjoyment, that we are gaining anything. We are the gainers only when we sacrifice the pleasures of this life in order to find That which connects us with the Unseen Realm; and when we do this, we actually gain more in our present life, because we learn how to live with understanding and how to face death fearlessly. That is the proof of the true Knower,—to be able to meet death as only a change of garment. Why should we feel afraid of death? It may destroy the body, but not the Soul. And when we see someone we love dying, why should we suffer? The true man is not dead. It is only the fleshly covering which he has left behind. The real person is still living. It is because we have so little understanding that we suffer. The Hereafter is nothing but darkness to one who

has not studied this life and grasped its meaning; but he who understands this life, quickly finds his connection with the other life. He walks into that other realm and takes up his next duties naturally and easily.

Such a man becomes fearless and lives only to fulfill the commands of God. If he meets with misfortune, he sees God's will working through it; and he knows also that all happiness and success come through His Will. Thus seeing all life as nothing but a manifestation of Infinite Will, he gives himself up wholly to that Divine Will and the Infinite radiates through his every thought, word and action. His body may fall, hundreds of bodies may fall; still, knowing the undying nature of the Soul, he stands up and boldly declares "Death cannot harm me." When one has that conviction it matters not where he lives, whether in the world or out of it, whether in the midst of activity or in the calm of solitude, everywhere he carries this mighty consciousness. This is what St. Paul meant when He said: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." It is not that we actually overcome death or save the body from dying, but we overcome the ignorance of what dies and what is undying; and we realize that there is no death for the Real; that the Soul within, which is part of God, cannot die.

To be in accord with man is human happiness; to be in accord with God is Divine happiness. Those who enjoy the happiness of God, when born into the world, are but fulfilling their Divine functions; when they die, they do but undergo a physical change. Thus those who enjoy the happiness of God have no grievance against God, no grudge against man. Nothing material injures them; nothing spiritual punishes them.

Chuangzu.

WHAT SEEKEST THOU, MY SOUL?

By M. Storey Williams.

Seekest Thou liberation, O my Soul?

Seekest Thou Supreme Knowledge, Supreme Wisdom, Supreme Bliss?

Then must Thou enter the Path.

Fearest Thou toil and hardship therein?

Nay, fear not, for Love is the Guide and Life the Goal.

If hardships oppress Thee, murmur not;

If thorns tear Thy garment, bewail not;

If sharp rocks cut and bruise Thy feet, moan not;

Nor if cloud and storm darken the way and buffet Thee shalt Thou lose heart.

Naught canst Thou encounter along the Path that Thou hast not Thyself placed there.

Thine own thoughts and deeds and words are gone ahead to form and fashion Thy Path to be.

'Tis well, my Soul, if Thou dost comprehend, and so retain Thine inner poise amid all adverse happenings.

For thus alone canst Thou neutralize the karmic seeds of woe and learn to tread the Path as freeborn child of Heaven.

Mayhap wilt Thou oft find mossy dells bedecked with fragrant flowers, that are as jewels to delight Thee; sunshine, warm and tender, and shade of foliage rare to shelter Thee; the song of birds, the laughter of rippling streams, all these and many more to bring Thee joy, mayhap, shall greet Thee as on Thou journeyest.

Ah! then, my Soul, in great humility rejoice, for in all this gladsomeness dost Thou encounter but Thine own thoughts of love, Thy tender words, compassionate deeds and conquests over self already offered.

Go ever bravely on. A day must dawn for Thee when sowing and reaping are forgotten, when yesterdays and to-

morrows, joy and sorrow are no more, When "That" alone is known.

THE POWER OF SPIRIT.

Class Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda

In this world we no doubt see that a man who does not glorify the Lord may live a successful life. Often those who have no moral standard, who oppress the poor, who lord it over the good, appear to live happily; and in many ways wrong seems to prosper. But this material power wins the victory only for a few days. In the end God always comes out victorious. It is the spiritual power that endures. The power of a Napoleon or an Alexander the Great is nothing compared to the power that have those men who never shed a drop of human blood and never care to seek for power. I can prove this. What is man? Man is mind. When you can control your own mind, the art which shows you that will show you how to control all other minds. If you can solve one problem by the rule of three, you can solve all other problems. The principle remains the same for all. So if you have learned to control the force working through your own mind, it is easy to control the same force elsewhere, for mind is everywhere alike. The teacher is one who has learned the art of controlling his own mind. The Great Ones like Christ or Buddha who have conquered the world did so because they had conquered themselves.

The power of Spirit is infinitely greater than the power of matter. But what is Spirit and what is matter? Whatever can be felt, conceived, thought of, seen, or heard, is matter. It is the object, something that can be known. Spirit is not all this. Put a *not* to all these and that will define Spirit. Matter is heavy, Spirit is not heavy; matter is limited, Spirit is unlimited; matter is changeable, Spirit is not changeable.

All that is not matter is Spirit; so by knowing what is not matter, we know Spirit indirectly. But what am I? We think that this "I" is the name of the body and we therefore identify ourselves with the body. But this "I" is something else. The body is destined to die, but this "I" shrinks from death; the body is dull and stupid, but this "I" is eager, hungering to learn; this body is unconscious, but this "I" is ever striving to be more and more conscious. So all the tendencies of this "I" are away from the body or matter; and if we have this spiritual tendency, we must have come from spirit. All the great teachers have taught us: "Do not think that you are this bundle of flesh and blood. This idea is the offspring of ignorance. You are not made to live on what the world can give you. You are self-existent. You are beginningless, endless Spirit. You are naturally conscious. Eternally you are existent. 'Sword cannot pierce you, fire cannot burn you, water cannot wet you, air cannot dry you.' This is your true nature."

Ask yourself whether you wish to live or whether you wish to die; whether you wish to be ignorant, or whether you wish to be all-knowing. We all want to be all-knowing, therefore by nature we must be all-knowing. We all want to be blissful, therefore we must be all-blissful; and we must be eternal, because we never want to die. A fish taken out of water will not care for the greatest luxury or honor on land. You may lay him on a throne and offer him everything, but he will say: "Put me in dirty water even, but do not keep me on land." This is because water is his natural element. We judge of the nature of an animal by its likes and dislikes; if in the same way we look to our own likes and dislikes, we can tell what is our real nature. Does not every one like to be *Sat* or existent? No one wishes to die. Does not every one long for unlimited knowledge? Does not every one desire unbroken happiness? So the great teachers have found out that the nature of man

is *Sat-chit-anandam* (eternal life, knowledge and bliss). He is not the material body; he is not the subtle body; he is not all these *koshas* or sheaths; but he is That which he is desiring. The more we think of ourselves in this way, the more our infinite nature will manifest itself.

It is not possible to know the Infinite if we are finite. We must first know that we are infinite. We wish to marry the Infinite, we must therefore belong to the same caste. A Brahmin boy can only marry a Brahmin girl, so to win the hand of the Infinite we must prove and know that we are infinite. Matter is that which is limited and which limits. We now feel limited by coming in contact with matter. We must realize that we are not matter but Spirit, we must cease to identify ourselves with the body. We must convince ourselves that we are Spirit by differentiating ourselves from matter. We must join ourselves to God. To do this we must conquer all egotism. This "I" is the greatest barrier between ourselves and God. It hides our God from us.

Do I belong to myself? Can I do what I wish? Or am I guided by a Higher Power? If I analyze my life, I shall find that I am a plaything in the hands of an Infinite Power. I am not my own master. If I were, I could get what I like. Who does not wish to have everything to gratify his desires? But no one succeeds in getting all that he wants. No matter how rich a man is, he always wants something. Do we find anyone who is perfectly happy? Go to the Emperor of Russia, go to any prince or king and ask if he is happy. They have power, they have wealth, they have apparently everything; and yet not one of them will say that he is truly happy. This is because no joy can be found in selfishness. It is only when we forget ourselves for some one else that we become happy, and lasting happiness is ours only when we have forgotten ourselves wholly for God.

It is the highest duty of man to love God above all things, and this love must be incessant and disinterested. We must never cease to love Him, but not because He has power to satisfy our desires. We must not love Him for what He gives —as people seek out a rich man, follow him about and flatter him; then, being satisfied or disappointed, go away. Such time-servers are not real devotees. Their love is not for the Lord but for what they can get from Him. They are not God-worshippers but Mammon-worshippers. What is disinterested love? The little child loves his father. That father may be poor and wretched, yet the child will run and jump up in his lap with joy, but not in the lap of the rich man who comes with him. Such should be our love for God. And it must be unceasing. We must never forget Him for a moment. Then only will our higher nature be free to act. If we really love the Lord of the universe, we shall no longer care for the temporary things of the world. When love for the Infinite One awakens within us, then all these small worldly satisfactions,—name, fame, property, position, will seem worthless to us. If a man can claim a millionaire for his father, he will be so proud and so secure in his father's wealth that he will fear nothing and ask nothing. So if we can once learn to regard the Lord of the universe as our real father, then we shall lose all anxiety and greed.

We fear and desire because we do not know what we are. The light of the lamp above us there is brilliant; but if the chimney which surrounds it were not transparent, the light would be obscured. So each of us is a great light, but that light has been obscured by our ignorance, because we identify ourselves with the body and are attracted by the things of this world. Incessant and disinterested love for God, however, will remove all these obstructions. When we have been able to give our whole heart to Him, a revelation will come to us

which will make the little riches of the world, the little joys of the world, the little sorrows of the world seem as nothing. It is these narrow earthly attachments which have covered up the infinite nature of man and which make him think that he is this limited human being. When they are removed, then at once he will realize his own nature; and when he realizes his own nature, he will know that he is the son of the Infinite and Eternal Lord of all.

WHEN THOU DIDST MAKE ME.

From the Tamil of Siva-vakyar.

(A South-Indian poet of about the 10th century.)

When Thou didst make me, Thou didst know my all:
But I knew not of Thee. 'Twas not till light
From Thee brought understanding of Thy ways
That I could know. But now where'er I sit,
Or walk, or stand, Thou art for ever near.
Can I forget Thee? Thou art mine, and I
Am only Thine. E'en with these eyes I see,
And with my heart perceive, that Thou art come
To me as lightning from the lowering sky.

If thy poor heart but choose the better part,
And in this path doth worship only God,
His heart will stoop to thine, will take it up
And make it His. One heart shall serve for both.

The more a man followeth after his own self-will, and self-will groweth in him, the further off is he from God, the true Good. For a man's highest good would be and truly is, that he should not seek himself nor his own things, nor his own end in any respect, either in things spiritual or things natural, but should seek only the praise and glory of God and His holy will. *Theologia Germanica.*

THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL.

The Vedanta philosophy declares the Soul to be without a beginning, ascribes its special lot in life to its own Karma (past actions) in other bodies, and believes its salvation to be the fruit of its own efforts. On what grounds does it make these claims? One fundamental principle underlies them all. It is the doctrine of an ever unfailing and infallible justice presiding over the economy of the whole universe. The law that all actions and all thoughts make their mark on the destiny of the struggling Soul and that both virtue and vice meet with their due, is the law that determines the entire career of the Soul from its first beginning up to its final attainment. Justice is the law of the universe; and each one's share of suffering and happiness, as also each one's capacity for spiritual progress and salvation, are proportioned to his good and evil deeds in this or in previous births. The follower of Vedanta accepts this law as the basis of his philosophy of life and to him it is a self-evident axiom. Virtue based on self-sacrifice is followed by happiness, and vice based on selfishness is followed by suffering, as invariably as light follows the rising of the sun and darkness its setting. If in the world "the good die first and they whose hearts are dry as summer dust burn to the socket," this involves no violation of the due apportionment of the results of conduct.

This principle of universal justice may be set down by many as an assumption not supported by the actual facts of experience, which appear to show in Nature more of injustice than justice. But Vedanta does not confine its vision to one life only. It takes the career of the *Jiva* or individual Soul as a whole, and regards the present life as simply a stage in the onward march of its evolution. It does not have recourse to the unphilosophic doctrine of original sin to explain the Soul's present condition. It recognizes that the lot of man in the

world, so far as it is open to our observation, is not what it ought to be, if this one life covers the whole of his embodied existence. Estimating action and its reward within the limits of our personal experience, we are all forced to admit that they are too often sadly out of proportion to each other. But such an estimate does not take into account the balance of past action which the Soul brings with it. It does not come here fresh from the Maker's hand. It has had its morning elsewhere. "The Soul that rises with us hath had elsewhere its setting and cometh from afar." Plato and Wordsworth both seem to think that the Soul enters upon its earthly existence from a region of absolute happiness and glory. But this is not exactly the conception held by the follower of Vedanta. He believes that the present life is not the first voyage of the Soul in a bodily form, but that it is only one journey in a series of such voyages; that the Soul sets out on this journey freighted with the unexhausted loads of other voyages; and that it will keep voyaging thus from port to port until it succeeds in reaching the first haven of God-existence from which it started.

The Divine Guide and Ordainer of things simply measures out to each individual a lot in life corresponding to the sum of his earnings in past lives. He who has not sown cannot reap. In this life we reap the fruits of our past labors and sow the seed of future good or evil harvests; or it may be that we work towards liberation from all bondage of birth and death. The Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad states it thus: "A person consists of his desires. As is his desire, so is his will; and as is his will, so is his deed; and whatever deed he does, that will he reap. To whatever object a man's own mind is attached, to that he goes strenuously together with his deed; and having obtained the results of whatever deed he does here on earth, he returns again from that world (which is the tem-

porary reward of his deed) to this world of action. So much for the man who desires. But as to the man who does not desire, who is satisfied in his desires, or who desires God only, his vital forces do not depart elsewhere; being one with God, he goes to God." That is, he is not forced to seek further embodiment, but he passes into the God-state of existence. What this is, only he who has experienced it can know. As Sri Ramakrishna once replied to the question: "When anyone asks you what is the taste of ghee (clarified butter), all you can say is that it is like the taste of ghee." Nor does Vedanta attempt to tell us why the soul ever emerged from that state to undertake the world-journey, because it knows that where the question is asked the answer cannot be given, and where the answer can be known the question will not be asked.

The difficulty of a rational explanation of the distribution of good and evil in the world is one to be met by every thoughtful observer. It is the stumbling block of pure Rationalism and the chief support of Nihilism and Atheism. It is also the parent of many a curious doctrine in theology. The idea of the tree of knowledge and the temptation of the serpent came into existence under its influence. It has made almost every system of philosophy and religion pessimistic. In nearly all the writings of religious philosophies we find this irresistible conviction—that the world is inevitably imperfect contrary to the intention of its Author—finding expression in exact proportion to the general clearness of their understanding. This problem however of reconciling the presence of evil in the world with the doctrine of an omnipotent and all-good Creator does not exist, as we have already said, in the system of Vedanta. According to it our present happiness and misery are not to be estimated merely by our conduct in this life, but should be considered in connection with what we were in the past.

Because the present course of life is insufficient to explain the purpose of creation or to account for the apparent lack of justice in the social economy, Vedanta, instead of losing faith in the wise ordering of the universe, becomes convinced by the law of cause and effect that the Soul's present life forms only a small fragment of its real life. It counts, as it were, merely as one rung in a ladder, the top of which rests against the very throne of God and the foot of which lies buried deep beyond the ken of men. Whether the individual goes up or down this ladder is wholly determined by the nature of his activities in each embodiment. But however he may loiter on the way and waver in his course, Vedanta firmly holds to the doctrine that eventually every living being must reach perfection. And the whole of creation is designed for this,—to provide a field where the weak may become strong, the ignorant may gain knowledge, the unseeing may learn to see; where all Souls through patient striving may attain to God, their home of eternal peace and infinite bliss.

YUDHISHTHIRA'S PILGRIMAGE TO HEAVEN.

Taken from the Mahabharata.

Having heard of the slaughter of the Vrishnis and Sri Krishna's ascension into Heaven, Yudhishthira, the Kaurava king, set his heart on leaving the world. Calling Arjuna, he addressed him thus: "Time consumes all things. All that has happened is due to the cords of time with which every living being is bound. It behooveth thee to see this." Arjuna assented, as did Bhima and their twin brothers, Nakula and Sahadeva. Then the Pandavas, together with the Queen Draupadi, having made over the kingdom to the son of Yudhishthira's uncle, resolved to retire from worldly life. Putting off all their royal garments and ornaments, they

clothed themselves in the soft bark of trees, and set out for the forest with their faces turned toward the East. But as they walked a dog followed them.

These princes of restrained souls, devoted to Yoga (religious practice), and purified by fasting and meditation, wandered from one point of the compass to the other, until at last, travelling towards the North, they beheld the towering Himavat, then the loftier Meru, the foremost of all high-peaked mountains. But as these mighty ones were proceeding upward, all rapt in religious contemplation, Draupadi, falling away from Yoga, dropped down upon the earth. Beholding her fallen down, Bhima, the second brother, of great strength, questioned King Yudhishthira, saying: "O Scorcher of thy foes, this princess never did any sinful act. Tell us, for what cause has she fallen down on the earth?"

Yudhishthira answered: "She had too great partiality for Arjuna. She obtains the fruit of that conduct today, O best of men."

Having said this, that first of Bharata's sons, of righteous soul, endued with great intelligence, and with his mind intent upon itself, proceeded onward. Then Sahadeva, of great learning, fell upon the earth. Beholding him drop down, Bhima again addressed the King, saying: "He who with deep humility used to serve us all, alas, why is this son of Madravati fallen down on the earth?"

Yudhishthira answered: "He never thought anyone his equal in wisdom. It is for that fault that this prince has fallen down."

Having said this, the king went on with the three remaining brothers and the dog. Beholding Draupadi and Sahadeva gone, the brave Nakula, whose love for kinsmen was very strong, himself fell down. Beholding the falling down of the heroic Nakula, famed for his personal beauty, Bhima once

more addressed the King, saying: "This brother of ours who was endued with righteousness without a flaw and who always obeyed our behests, this Nakula of unrivalled beauty, why has he fallen down?"

Thus addressed, Yudhishthira spoke these words: "He was indeed of righteous soul and the foremost of all in intelligence, but he thought there was none who could equal him in beauty of person. It is for this that Nakula has fallen down."

Beholding Nakula and the others fall, Arjuna, that slayer of heroic foemen, himself fell down in overpowering grief of heart. And again Bhima said unto the King: "I do not recall the least untruth ever uttered by this high-souled one. Indeed, not even in jest did he ever speak aught that was false. For what then has this one fallen down on the earth?"

Yudhishthira answered: "Arjuna, proud of his heroism, boasted that he would consume all our foes in a single day; but he did not fulfill his word. Hence has he fallen down. He looked with disdain upon all other wielders of the bow. One desirous of lasting glory should never be guilty of such vain thoughts."

Having thus spoken, the King proceeded on. Then Bhima fell down. Having fallen, Bhima addressed the King a last time, saying: "O King, behold! I who am thy beloved brother have fallen! For what reason have I dropped down? Tell me, if thou knowest."

Yudhishthira answered: "Thou wert too greedy for food and thou wert accustomed to boast of thy strength. Also while eating thou didst not attend to the wants of others. It is for that, O Bhima, that thou hast fallen down." Having spoken these words, the mighty-armed Yudhishthira journeyed onward without looking back. He had only one companion now, —the dog still followed him.

Then the Lord of Heaven, filling earth and sky with a loud sound, came towards the son of Pritha in a chariot and asked him to mount upon it. But King Yudhishthira said unto that Deity of a thousand eyes: "My brothers have all dropped here on the earth. They must go with me. Without them I do not wish to go to Heaven. The princess Draupadi also should go with us. It behooveth thee to permit them."

Indra said: "Thou shalt behold thy brothers in Heaven and Draupadi likewise. Having cast off their human bodies, they have gone there before thee. But it is ordained that thou shalt go thither in this very body of thine."

Yudhishthira said: "But this dog has been devoted to me. He too should go with me. My heart is full of compassion for him."

The Lord of Heaven replied: "Immortality and a state equal to my own, also glory, high success and all the felicities of Heaven thou hast won today! But do thou cast off this dog. He cannot go with thee."

Yudhishthira said: "O thou Mighty One, it is exceedingly difficult for the righteous to perpetrate an unrighteous act. I do not desire a prosperity for which I shall have to cast off one that is devoted to me."

Indra insisted: "No one can enter Heaven with a dog. Do thou abandon it."

Yudhishthira said: "It has been declared that it is most sinful to abandon one who is devoted. Hence, O great Indra, I shall not abandon this dog today out of desire for my own happiness. This has always been my vow steadfastly pursued: I never forsake one who is frightened, nor one who is devoted to me, nor one who seeks my protection, nor one who is afflicted, nor one who is weak or fearful of his life. I shall never give up such a one till my own life is at an end."

Indra said: "Do thou abandon this dog, for thereby thou

shalt attain the region of the gods. Thou didst leave behind thy brothers and Draupadi; why art thou now so obstinate? Thou hast renounced everything. Why then dost thou not renounce this dog?"

Yudhishthira answered: "I abandoned my brothers and Draupadi because they were dead and I was unable to revive them. I did not abandon them so long as they were alive. To frighten one who has sought our protection, to slay a woman, to steal from a holy man, and to injure a friend—like unto these evil deeds is the abandonment of one who is faithful and devoted."

Hearing these words of Yudhishthira, the dog became transformed into the Deity of Righteousness, who, well pleased, spoke these words in a sweet voice fraught with blessing:

"Thou art well born, O King of kings, truly wise and of righteous conduct. Thou hast compassion for all creatures. For the sake of a faithful dog thou didst renounce celestial joys. Hence in Heaven is there none equal to thee and the regions of inexhaustible felicity are thine. Truly hast thou won a high goal."

REPORTS.

No one of the younger branches of the work undertaken by the Ramakrishna Mission has moved forward with greater zeal and rapidity than the Centre at Dacca in East Bengal. Although established only a few years ago, already a suitable building has been erected for the resident workers and for a Free School. Now a report comes to us of the dedication of the first building of a hospital, erected, fully equipped and presented to the Mission by a prominent Zemindar in memory of his only son. At the opening exercises the Governor of Bengal, the Honorable Thomas David Baron Carmichael, pre-

sided. In his address he paid the following glowing tribute to the work of the Mission: "The members of the Ramakrishna Mission are actuated by that spirit of helpfulness which is much needed in this world—the spirit which makes men ask themselves the simple question: 'Can I help?'; and which makes them say, 'If I can, it is my duty to do so'; the spirit which leads to social service without any distinction of caste or race or creed. The members of the Mission work in this spirit for the spiritual, intellectual and bodily good of their fellowmen. They hold religious services, thereby helping men to realize that personal relation of man to God which is the foundation of religious devotion. They conduct schools for the elementary education of the masses and they maintain hospitals for the relief of human suffering. Their spirit of helpfulness carries them further. It takes them out into the highways and byways of life seeking to bring relief to the poor, the sick and the helpless. All honor to them in their work!"

* * *

Although it has been possible to close some of the Relief Centres opened by the Ramakrishna Mission in the famine-swept districts of Bengal, the pitiful distress in other regions has obliged them to open new Centres. In these they are not only distributing food, but have irrigated a large tract of land by digging a canal, thus assuring a better harvest. During the month under review, 4048 people were cared for weekly.

Another band of workers has been called to a flooded district near Benares. As soon as news of the distress reached the Mission, two boats were sent out with provisions, 40 villages were visited and 215 families, consisting of 631 members, were given rations of food for three days. This expedition was followed up by others, bringing further relief to the afflicted districts.

* * *

Swami Paramananda left Boston on Dec. 11th to return to Los Angeles for a short season. He will go from there to San Francisco, and later will probably deliver some lectures in Seattle.

* * *

The work will continue as usual at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Services and Classes being conducted by Sister Devamata during the Swami's absence. In December, Sunday the 24th, was set apart for the special Christmas Services. In the morning the subject of the address was "Divine Incarnation," and at the hour of Vespers the windows of the house were bright with many candles, especially that on the corner of the Parkway, where an altar to the Christ Child had been arranged. Throughout Christmas week this altar was lighted every evening. The Chapel was also trimmed with evergreen garlands and everything possible was done to add to the beauty and joy of the holy season. On Christmas afternoon the workers were "at home" to all friends of the Centre in the Community House and many came to make merry around the tree and share in the Christmas cheer.

* * *

The Centre and "The Message of the East" begin the new year with the earnest prayer that it may be their blessed privilege to bring new light and courage and peace to an ever increasing number through the coming months; and that they may more fully fulfill their mission of binding together not only East and West, but North and South, high and low, Christian and Buddhist, Hindu, Mohammedan and Jew in a closer bond of understanding, tolerance, sympathy and love; that the day may be hastened when men will no longer see creed, caste, race or color, but only throbbing human hearts, possessed of like feelings, beset with like temptations and seeking consciously or unconsciously the same God.

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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HOW TO CONSERVE OUR ENERGIES.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

According to ancient Indian philosophy this universe is composed of two principal elements. One is called *Akasa,* an all-pervading primordial substance, imperceptible to the senses, but manifested in the basic elements, earth, water, air, fire and ether, out of which all bodies come into existence. The other, which holds together these material forms, is known as *Prana* or vital force, the force by which man lives and moves and without which he can do nothing. The senses which appear to be such important factors in our life would be of little use without this vital force, so also the mind and every part of the physical organism. We should therefore try to understand what the nature of this life-force is and how it may be controlled; for the great Indian teachers have taught us that by proper control of this force a man can be not only physically healthy, but intellectually brilliant; he can also rise spiritually and become illumined. At present there are very few who know the use or even the existence of this *Prana,* for we cannot see it. Most of us live here unconsciously, doing everything automatically through habit. We utilize our energies without thinking what they are or what they should bring us; still less does it occur to us that it is our duty to conserve and direct them to definite ends. Yet we shall not know what true health or happiness or illumination is until we have learned how to gather up these vital

forces of our organism and command them at our will. Just as light when dissipated scarcely suffices to read by, but when we put a shade over it and concentrate its rays we are able to see the finest print; similarly when all the forces manifested through our body, mind and senses are stored up, regulated and focused, we discover possibilities of wisdom and happiness within us of which we are wholly unconscious at present.

But how is this to be accomplished? Some may think hastily that by not doing anything one may store up his energies. It has been found, however, that the energy of a man who does nothing, instead of increasing, fades away. On the other hand, if we imagine that by constant use of our faculties we can gain greater power, that also is a mistake; for we know that through overwork a man often breaks down. Neither of these methods therefore can help us to conserve and increase our energy. But there is a way by which it can be done,—not by overworking, nor by stopping work, but by finding balance in all our activity. When this balance is manifested in the physical body, the result is good health; when it is manifested on the mental plane, we have intellectual power; when it is found on the spiritual plane, the result is superconsciousness or illumination. But the energy is one. It is always the same life-force which the Indian Sages called *Prana*—the vital cause of our existence, of all our thinking and doing. It manifests itself on every plane; but as we are able to draw it up from our lower organism, we gain ever-increasing power for higher things.

As thought guides all our bodily activities, so the Sages found that thought was the best medium for directing this life-force. How little attention we pay to this great instrument which is placed in our hands by God Almighty! How often we abuse or misuse it! Yet our actions can never pro-

duce the best results until our thoughts are properly regulated. Only as we cease to dissipate our mental energies and are able to establish a balance between our outer and our inner activities, between our body and our mind, can we hope to have either peace or strength. Every living being, even the most insignificant, has the same possibility of awakening this great life-force within himself. As a rule, however, we run after pleasure and power and try to gain these from the external universe. The result is that we are always rushing outward and we do not stop to think what we have within ourselves. Whenever a problem arises in our mind, our tendency is to go outside; we hasten to consult a book or some person; but the wise men tell us that we have within ourselves the key to all knowledge. In fact, no one can give us knowledge beyond the point where our inner nature is unfolded. We must therefore discover this inner storehouse of energy, and in our search it is best to deal first with that which is most immediate. This body is the most immediate reality to the majority of people. We may talk of subtle spiritual forces, of an imperceptible Soul abiding within, but very few can understand or believe in the reality of finer things. For that reason we must begin with the grossest of all instruments, the physical body. And the first question that arises is, have we this body under perfect control? Will our hands and feet, our senses and other organs obey us? Can we govern and direct them as our higher instincts prompt us? When we analyze, we find that very few of us have any power of control over what we call our body. The energies which manifest through it have become dissipated and because of this dissipation our eyes cannot bring us perfect vision, our ears and all our senses can give us only partial knowledge; that is why our perceptions are never free from error. But when we go to the foundation of our being and gather up all our forces, then we

gain command over them and can utilize them to our best advantage.

Matter cannot exist without the support and co-operation of *Prana;* therefore if man wants anything, he must try to understand this vital principle; and to do this he must first of all find balance. As long as there is undue activity or lethargy in our body, we cannot have true insight. What we need is to gain equilibrium in our whole organism, for equilibrium means strength. The body also must be obedient to the mind. Which is the sign of greater strength: when you let a horse rush madly on carrying you to destruction, because you have no power of control over it; or when you hold the reins firmly and make it go as you will? Certainly when you control it. Similarly this little body of ours, this instrument which God has given us, we should train and control it in such a way that it will be a true aid in our spiritual journey, instead of being the drawback it too often is. We must cease to be governed by our impulses. We must also cease to live thoughtlessly. We must learn to think intelligently and for ourselves; we must not let others think for us. Even what we gain through books cannot be true knowledge for us, although it may help us on our onward march; but true knowledge means direct vision, or as the Indian Sages call it, realization. It means coming face to face with the Truth; it means the union between subject and object. And only as we attain this shall we know our true power. Therefore we must exert ourselves; we must begin to think; we must question whether we guide our body or whether it is rebellious, and even a little observation will show us that not many of us can claim perfect mastery over the body.

Very few indeed are regulating and directing their forces properly. How much energy do we waste talking unnecessarily or in permitting useless automatic physical action which

only exhausts us. How much nervousness and misery might human beings avoid by a wise expenditure of their God-given energies! To remedy this is the stepping-stone to religion. Religion is not confined to one department of life. It has not only to do with man's soul nature, with his spiritual interest. It covers the whole ground of his being, for how can man rouse his spiritual interest until he has freed himself from physical bondage? All things work together. There is only one law and the law is uniform on all planes. What is good for one plane is good for all. If man tries to prepare his body, not for selfish ends, but in order that he may acquire greater wisdom, there is no wrong in his devoting himself to the care of his physical being; but he cannot gain either health or strength until he has proper control over that through which all his power comes. Man cannot truly enter into possession of his own latent possibilities until he has discovered and connected himself with his inner resources—until he has awakened his spiritual nature. If he is outdrawn, dragged hither and thither by his uncontrolled energies, he must try to be indrawn. He must cultivate his faculty of intra-vision. He has been looking outward so long without realizing his dreams or finding true happiness; let him now look within and see if he cannot find there what he has been vainly searching for on the outside.

He must also practise moderation. As long as man strives madly for pleasure, without using his faculty of discrimination, he merely exhausts himself and makes himself miserable. Nor should he go to the other extreme and practise self-torture. That man alone enjoys real blessing who observes moderation in all his activities. We must neither destroy any of our propensities nor become slaves to them; but we must take a masterly attitude towards them. And this is a great lesson that everyone needs to learn. How often we raise our

voices and want others to obey us; but have we succeeded in making ourselves obey? Yet we have the power. All power is within us. The very power which enables us to see ordinary things can be stored up in such a way that it will give us Divine sight; the power which helps us to hear these outer sounds and gain knowledge of this material world, can also lead us upward and enable us to hear the Eternal, that which satisfies the Soul of man. We must therefore gather up our forces and gathering up means concentration and concentration means strength. A single thread is easily broken, but when a number of threads are put together and twisted into twine, what power of resistance they have. Similarly all our small dissipated forces can be gathered together and through the power of concentration twisted into one strong whole; then we shall be able to resist anything. It is through such positive thoughts that the Sages have taught us,—not that we are sinners, but that each one can save himself; that the only saving Grace for each one of us is in his own higher spiritual nature; and until we have awakened that no one can save us. Do you suppose that by merely making laws for the prevention of crime we can prevent it? What we want is education, and the greatest education is to give man confidence in his Higher Self. In every man there are two tendencies:—one is dragging him down through the senses, the other is telling him what his soul needs. If he will awaken that higher Soul-Instinct and follow that, then he will find his Saviour within himself.

Until we have gained control over our lower nature, however, we never even suspect that we have imbedded in our heart the potentiality for the highest illumination and the highest happiness. We should therefore form the habit of having times when we relax and withdraw from all bodily activities. We find in all religions times set apart for prayer

or meditation. Why? Because as long as we are constantly moving outward and never look within, forgetting the vital factor in our life, there is nothing to sustain or nourish us; the storehouse is blocked. We must always try to keep ourselves connected with the storehouse of our life-force; and the more we can do this, the more irrisistible will our power become. The man who has command over his vital energy or *Prana* will always accomplish greater things in less time and with less exertion. Also the more quickly we can achieve victory over our lower self, the sooner shall we gain spiritual illumination. These ideas of self-conquest, of the power of concentration and meditation, are not peculiarly Indian. In every religion, wherever there has been any true growth of spiritual thought, you will find that it has come from an indrawn, meditative life. Even material scientists, how much they have to concentrate on a problem before they can solve it; for concentration always throws light and gives greater power. Physical concentration is necessary to gain health of body; mental concentration is necessary to sharpen our intellect; and when we have practised these two well and with discrimination, there will come a time when we can direct all our forces towards spiritual regeneration. Then the things which seem to us impossible today will become absolute realities. Our doubts will vanish of their own accord, for where there is sunlight there cannot be any darkness.

All the imperfection and limitation which we feel in our body and mind we can remove by not constantly thinking of this immediate, apparent, physical existence, but by joining our thoughts with the Higher Source, the Fountainhead of life and energy. When we can remain focused there, we shall be able to go on doing our duties without feeling any reaction. That is one of the great secrets of the Indian Sages. Through the ages they have taught that man can make his work a recre-

ation, that if he will connect himself with the Highest and keep his motive lofty, his work instead of exhausting him will bring him ever greater strength. It is not necessary for us to retire to a corner or become inactive to restore our vitality. If we will but learn to practise balance and moderation in all our activity, we shall enjoy true health of body and mind and shall surely attain spiritual illumination and freedom.

SELECTION FROM THE SAMHITA.

A Dialogue between the Sage Astavakra and King Janaka.

The Sage Astavakra said:

Self-knowledge is the source of blessedness. Self-government gives supremacy. Self-control confers contentment, and the vision of the Self reveals the Absolute.

Blessed is that wise man who is thoughtful yet free from care; in full possession of his sense organs yet not a slave to them; intelligent but not cunning; self-possessed but not egotistical; neither a pleasure-seeker nor a misanthrope; neither satiated nor thirsty; who is unattached and prays for nothing; who is undistracted in the midst of distractions; surrounded by matter but not a materialist; learned but not vain.

The fool in his mad longing for liberation forges fresh chains of bondage. The wise man cleaves the root of the tree of ignorance, which is the source of all misfortune.

The fool longs for peace and fails to enjoy it. Peace dwells in the mind of the wise man, for he knows the Truth.

How can one see the real, whose gaze is fixed on the apparent? The wise man, with eyes ever on Truth, sees not the unreal.

The fool vainly strives for self-mastery. The wise man, of joyous soul, without straining or striving, is always a perfect master of himself.

He who has a wandering mind controls it; but the all-embracing mind of the wise man is never distracted, so it requires no controlling.

The man who is free from selfish desires, whether a king or a beggar, shines by his own light; he remains unmoved by good or evil, by the beautiful or unbeautiful.

The humble-hearted wise man works without a sense of "I" . . . . All the passions and propensities of the lower nature weaken when the Sage feels "I am not the doer," "I am not the enjoyer," "I am not the sufferer."

The wise man, free from the impulse of desire, can live with equal ease in the midst of luxury or in a mountain cave.

He does his duty and expects nothing . . . His behavior is quiet. Without desire, he conforms to the customs and usages of society. Having left all sorrow behind, he lives like a vast lake unruffled by waves.

Blessed is that man who keeps an even temper in all the affairs of life. . . . What is sadness or mirth, bondage or liberation, to him in whom the lamp of Truth burns perpetually?

He rushes not into the crowded arena of life nor repairs to the wilderness. He lives self-poised anywhere and everywhere.

In this world a true knower is never miserable or discontented and never complains. He never thinks: "I do not possess this" or "I would have been happy if I had that," for he knows that God fills the entire universe.

The Yogi has everything in common with all except the feeling of "I-ness" and "Mine-ness." Nothing annoys him, he longs for nothing. Ever pure in heart, free from all selfish desires, his liberated soul shines.

Who can imagine the feeling of completeness and sweet restfulness which the wise man enjoys in his inner soul? His sorrows are over, he has outlived his little hopes and fears.

KARMA-YOGA.

By S. E. Waldo.

The goal of life is really knowledge, knowledge of the reality of things. We are apt to think that it is pleasure, and seeking pleasure in sense-gratification, we meet with so many disappointments and sorrows that we sometimes almost despair and are led to believe that all life is a vain dream with no sure foundation anywhere. Knowledge alone can enable us to set our feet on a trustworthy foundation, but this knowledge is not to be gained by accumulating facts about the material universe. It must be knowledge of the internal world, not the external; and one way of gaining this Knowledge Absolute, which is also Freedom Absolute, is through *Karma* or work. This word *Karma,* in its most limited sense, is work or action. Everything we do, is *Karma.* Then there is a wider sense in which this word is used; it means also the accumulated results of all past actions which become the seed or cause of future actions. It is an endless chain of cause and effect in which we are involved, and from which only a knowledge of how to act without producing reaction can ever free us.

Karma-Yoga is meant to teach us exactly this,—to make clear to us first the causes of our bondage, and secondly the method of getting rid of the causes so as to escape from the effects. In this as in every thing else the cure of an evil, to be effective, must reach to its roots. It is no use to deal merely with effects; we must get behind them, find the causes and deal with them. Behind all actions lies their cause, that ceaseless endeavor of the soul after freedom, after the realization of its true nature. This intense desire for freedom is like a gigantic, immensely powerful spring, coiled up in every human being and incessantly urging him in his effort to find release from its mighty pressure—release which can only come when the

desire for freedom has been satisfied, when the spring has expanded, when the goal has been reached. Very few of us really know the reason of our unrest, the cause of our endless struggle which too often leaves us baffled and exhausted. Yet even while we tell ourselves that there is no truth to be reached, deep within us speaks an insistent voice denying this conclusion, a voice which tells us there is a glorious goal and impels us to take up the struggle again and again. All this struggle and pain and doubt come from our ignorance of what we really are and of how we may reach that true happiness which ordinarily eludes our grasp.

The first lesson of Karma-Yoga is a hard one to learn, for it calls upon us to abandon the search for pleasure, to cease struggling for something to increase the comfort and well-being of our little personalities which we think so important; it tells us to sink our petty interest in these our apparent selves and to devote all our efforts to widen out the little ego and make it all-embracing. It calls upon us to work for all humanity with as keen an interest as that with which we are accustomed to work for ourselves. Now we work from some motive, we work to get something we want; that something varies with every human being, and so each is pulling apart from all the rest and striving to get the particular thing upon which his heart is set, all to himself, thinking that if he only succeeds in getting it he will be satisfied and happy. How many do we find who are so satisfied and happy? Think of the countless ages through which this struggle has been going on! And yet we are as far from the goal as ever. That is because we are simply "chasing the horizon" whenever we seek to get something for ourselves alone, or even for our families or our relatives or our friends or our city or our country or even the whole human race. That little possessive pronoun *our* poisons every effort at its source. As long

as we say "our" and seek to benefit any person or persons because they belong to "*us*," we are cutting ourselves off from the "not-us" and in that line of separation lies the whole of our misery. If we succeed in identifying ourselves with the whole universe and work for it as a whole, we shall lose all sense of "mine" and "our."

What need is there to label anything in particular as "ours" when we possess all things and there is nothing in this wide universe which is not ours? The grand old Vedic hymn tells us how the Great Self says: "Through all eyes I see, through all ears I hear, throught all mouths I eat, in all life I live." When we can feel that to be true of ourselves, we shall be able to work for all and to get beyond the effects of work done for our own personal gain. Altruism so-called, when pushed to its ultimate position, means practically just this. When we have learned to include the whole universe in ourselves, what then can remain to us of the little self? In our ignorance we are too frequently apt to mistake this little self for the universe, to let it stand between us and all outside, until it obscures our vision and we come to think of it as though it were all there is of any importance to us. Intense selfishness defeats its own ends, because it opens as many avenues for suffering as for self-seeking. We can really get very little; but if we desire everything, each disappointed longing has its own sting and we become more and more unhappy and discontented. Then we blame every one but ourselves for all our disappointments; and that, reacting on us, increases our discomfort. We thus make of our whole mentality a mere bundle of sensitive points, every one of which is open to wounds and blows of every sort and from each of which we suffer pain more or less acute. This arises no doubt from a perfectly natural desire to be happy, but in seeking to fulfill this desire we make the mistake of supposing that our little personal self

is all. We do not look ahead far enough, we limit our world to a narrow circle, and only the knowledge of truth will help us to widen it; that is why knowledge is our goal.

We must begin where we stand and take up the work that comes to us in our daily lives; by doing that unselfishly we make ourselves fit for larger and higher work. It is no use to rush away in discontent from the particular place in the world's great workshop in which we find ourselves and seek a wider and more inviting sphere of action. We never can be fit for that wider sphere until we are first able to thoroughly and wisely discharge the particular duties laid upon us by our present position in the world. Everything in this universe is a continuous process, a growth, one thing gradually evolving from another. There are no sudden jumps here. It is only steady, persistent, patient effort that brings the greatest results. We can only begin where we are, we cannot by any amount of wishing transport ourselves to other surroundings. If we were wise we would not even wish to do so, for just where we are is the very best place for us to begin the work of attaining something higher and better.

There is no general objective duty; indeed there cannot be, because human society has so many grades and states. We cannot make a hard and fast standard of morality. All we can do is to recognize that according to the environment this standard must and should and does vary. There is no positive duty from the subjective side; there can only be one general rule, that any action which leads us upward and Godward is a good action, while any action which leads in the contrary direction is bad and has to be avoided. The one universal rule of duty is to go upward and strive to reach the Divine; therefore we can safely say that every human being should do those things that tend to exalt him and leave undone such things as tend to debase and degenerate him. At this gener-

alization we must stop; for if we seek to go farther and particularize the special acts that will elevate or degrade us, we shall find ourselves in difficulty at once. This kind of specific determination of right conduct must be left to the special needs of nations, or races, or particular social conditions—the needs that give use to it. The idea that what is duty to us ought to be the duty of everybody is a great superstition, and forms the most fruitful source of "envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness." It is one of those natural and well-nigh universal mistakes that we need to escape from as quickly as we can.

In addition to the fact that the results of all our actions have finally to come back to ourselves, we must also consider how they affect others and how we are affected in turn by the actions of our fellowmen. Every act a man does is the result of a certain mental condition, and in its turn it will, upon repetition, have a tendency to create that condition. Thought and action constantly act and react on each other. When a man's mind is in a certain state, either of good or ill, he is laying himself open to receive impressions from all similar states in other men. When we think evil thoughts, we make ourselves ready for all the evil thought in the universe to rush in upon us. That is why we seem to gather such rapidly accelerating impulse when we start on what we call the "downward course." The more frequently we give way to evil thinking, the harder it becomes for us to conquer it; and that is not entirely due to the force of habit. It comes quite as much from this evil influence to which we are opening ourselves and which would have no power over us if we did not so invite it. When we endeavor to keep our minds fixed on good thoughts, we gain the added strength of all the good thought in the universe, because we have removed the barrier and as it were invited it to flow into our minds. We therefore run a double

danger in doing evil,—we lay ourselves open to all surrounding evil influences and we add to them that evil which will in turn affect others. In doing good to others we are really helping ourselves more than we can possibly help them; and the reverse also is just as true. No action can be an unmixed good or evil, there must ever be a share of both in every action, but we can see to it that good predominates in our activities. We use the good to overcome and displace the evil, but the time must come when we find that good too brings bondage. It may be a golden chain, but it will bind us quite as securely as an iron one. When we reach this perception, we shall find that our next endeavor must be to transcend good itself, to reach That which is neither good nor evil but includes both.

We now begin to understand what the *Gita* means when it says: "To work you have the right but not to the fruits thereof." We have to detach ourselves from our actions in such a way that no effects will return to us. Only by succeeding in doing this can we escape all pain and sorrow. As long as the results of our actions can touch us, just so long shall we be liable to suffer pain and distress. As long as praise can please and gratify us, so long will blame disturb us. When we can entirely separate the idea of self from what we do, then neither praise nor blame will have the least effect upon us. When we can regard our own conduct with the same absence of bias as we display when considering the conduct of another, in cases where it has not even the most remote effect upon ourselves, we shall smile serenely upon adverse criticism and upon any amount of adulation. Now the one is apt to throw us off our balance and the other to turn our head. We have only to think a minute to see how all our judgments are colored by the personal element, how hard it is to put this all-important "I" out of our minds. Consideration for this little "I" clouds our vision and warps our views of life. It is hard indeed to set

aside this importunate "spoiled child," to silence the clamor of the personal element and listen only to the voice of the higher wisdom, which tells us that this seeming self is false and unreal, that our real self is above and beyond all these trifling considerations, serene and untouched by the turmoil of life, an unmoved witness of this panorama of the universe that seems to us so real and so terrible.

When Karma-Yoga has taught us the secret of work and by our own effort we have begun to put what it teaches us into practical operation, we shall find that life is easier, that we are happier than we supposed we could be, and that in ceasing to chase pleasure we have come very nigh to capturing her. The result of all unselfish work is to purify us, to wash away the dross, to refine the gold. It is a long process, but it is sure. It teaches us the one great lesson to be learned in this world,—to forget ourselves. Jesus said: "He who loses his life shall find it;" and this is precisely the teaching of Karma-Yoga, which tells us that only through entire abnegation of the little self are the barriers and limitations of the aspiring soul thrown down and a realization of the One Self made possible. All distinction, all separation, is limitation; and whatever tends to intensify this feeling of separateness takes us so much farther from the goal. All life is one and indestructible; the differing, ever-changing forms under which it manifests itself to us can be destroyed, but life itself is eternal. There is one undivided mental ocean, in which our minds are but little whirlpools, so to say. Matter is one also, and all the varying forms we see around us are but brief eddies in the ever-rushing stream. Our lives are like the wind rushing through the street when the leaves lie scattered thickly on the ground. Now it picks up a few, whirls them round for a short space in a little ball, then drops them and picks up another pile. It is the same wind, but it is invisible to us; all

we can see are the manifestations of its presence in these little apparently self-animated balls of dancing leaves.

We are all like those little whirling leaf-balls; behind the name and form that seem to make us separate entities is the one Life which animates us all, the one Mind that supplies all our apparently differing minds, the One Self that is the basis and only reality of all these seeming selves. Our trouble is that we are always mistaking the apparent for the real. To take off the veils that cover our eyes, to free ourselves from the erroneous views we take of life, we need the purifying effect of unselfish action. We can so do our daily work, no matter how ignoble it may seem to us or to others, that our minds will be enlightened by the inner wisdom taught by unselfish action; and then true knowledge will be ours. This is the highest result of good work. When a man has reached the state of entire self-abnegation and is ready to sacrifice mind, body and everything for another being, he has attained the perfection of Karma-Yoga. "If a man has not studied a single philosophy, if he does not believe in God and has never believed, if he has never prayed once in his whole life, but if the simple power of good actions has brought him to that state wherein he is ready to give up his life and everything for others, he has reached the same point to which the religious man will come through his prayers and the philosopher through his knowledge." Work, worship and philosophy—all meet at one point, and that is self-abnegation. Whatever our own conduct may be, we all yield involuntary reverence to a purely noble and unselfish action.

Karma-Yoga tells us that only unselfish action escapes all personal effects. We did not do it for ourselves, so nothing returns to us. "Every good work we do without any ulterior motive, instead of forging a chain, will break one of the links in our chain. Every good thought that we send to the world,

without thinking of any return, will be stored up and break one link in the chain and make us purer and stronger." Thus by daily effort to do unselfishly the little tasks that each day brings, we gain experience and progress toward freedom. We rise gradually to feel that duty no longer compels us, that we have lost all sense of the compulsion of duty and are acting aright from our own nature; for us the "ought" has become the "is." When we have reached the point where we naturally do good because it is good to do good, where all sense of reward or punishment or personal gain of any kind has entirely disappeared from our minds, no more bondage can ever come to us from work. Then we shall have transcended law and shall be beyond its power. We shall work incessantly, but never identify ourselves with our work. We shall work as masters, no longer as slaves. We shall work through freedom and through love. We shall then have learned the secret of work, and learning that we shall have attained the goal. In the words of the Gita: "The man who worketh unattached attaineth the Supreme."

We desire, and desire most passionately when we are most ourselves, to give our service to that which is universal and to that which is abiding.—*Balfour.*

The essence of true nobility is neglect of self. Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of a great action is gone —like the bloom from a soiled flower.—*Froude.*

Know thou that the love of thyself doth hurt thee more than anything in the world. Thou canst not possess perfect liberty unless thou wholly renounce thyself. Give all for all, seek nothing, ask back nothing, abide purely and with a firm confidence in Me, and thou shalt possess Me; thou shalt be free in heart, and darkness shall not tread thee down.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

ALL IS HIS SERVICE.

Song by Kabir.

(Translation by Rabindranath Tagore)

O Sadhu! the simple union is the best.
Since the day when I met with my Lord, there has been no end to the sport of our love.
I shut not my eyes, I close not my ears, I do not mortify my body;
I see with eyes open and smile, and behold His beauty everywhere:
I utter his name, and whatever I see, it reminds me of Him; whatever I do, it becomes His worship.
The rising and the setting are one to me; all contradictions are solved.
Wherever I go, I move round Him,
All I achieve is His service:
When I lie down, I lie prostrate at His feet.

He is the only adorable one to me; I have none other.
My tongue has left off impure words, it sings His glory day and night:
Whether I rise or sit down, I can never forget Him; for the rhythm of His music beats in my ears.
Kabir says: "My heart is frenzied, and I disclose in my soul what is hidden. I am immersed in that one great bliss which transcends all pleasure and pain."

The kingfisher dives freely into the water, but the water does not wet its plumage; so the emancipated saint lives in the world but the world does not affect him. . . . That man is a true hero, who while living in the midst of the temptations of the world attains perfection.—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

THE POWER OF DETACHMENT.

From the Teachings of Chuang-Tzu.

Chi Hsing Tzu was training fighting cocks for the prince. At the end of ten days the prince inquired if they were ready. "Not yet," was Chi's answer; "they are in the stage of seeking fiercely for a foe."

Ten days elapsed and the prince asked again. "Not yet," replied Chi; "they are still excited by the sounds and shadows of other cocks."

Ten days more and once again the prince inquired. "Not yet," Chi answered; "even the sight of an enemy still excites them to rage."

After another ten days, however, when the prince asked, Chi replied: "They are ready. Other cocks may crow, but they take no notice. To look at them one might think they were made of wood. Their virtue is complete. Strange cocks will not dare to meet them; they will turn and run."

* * * *

Yen Yuan one day said to Confucius: "When I was crossing over the Shang-shen rapid, I noticed that the boatman managed his craft with marvellous skill. I asked him if handling a boat could be learned. 'It can,' was his reply. 'The way of those who know how to keep you afloat is more like sinking you. They row as if the boat wasn't there.' I inquired what he meant, but he would not tell me. I now ask you."

"He means," answered Confucius, "that such a man is oblivious of the water around him. He regards the rapid as if it were dry land. He looks upon an upset as an ordinary cart accident. And if a man can thus be fearless as to capsizings and accidents, whither should he not be able to go in peace and comfort?

"A man who plays for counters will play well. If he stakes his girdle, he will be nervous; if yellow gold, he will lose his

wits. His skill is the same in each case, but he is distracted by the value of his stakes. And everyone who attaches importance to the external, becomes internally without resource."

Chuang-Tzu declares: Only the perfect man can transcend the limits of the human and yet not withdraw from the world; can live in accord with mankind and yet suffer no injury himself. Of the world's teachings he learns nothing. He has that within which makes him independent of others.

TAPAS, OR THE PRACTICE OF AUSTERITY.

"By truthfulness, by *tapas,* by right-knowledge and self-restraint the Divine Self is to be gained." The Sanskrit word *"tapas"* used here is one which appears frequently in Indian Sacred Writings and always as an important element in spiritual practice. The fact that the original term is so often retained in translations shows that there is no exact English equivalent for it. Some Oriental scholars have tried to convey its meaning by the word "penance," others by "austerity," "asceticism" or "self-discipline"; but though all these ideas are contained in it, no one fully expresses it. It is derived from a root which means "to heat," and denoted originally the heat that is the source and support of life and energy in every form. The action of fire is twofold: it gives warmth, which is the condition of life; and light, which is the condition of knowledge. It was undoubtedly because of this vivifying and illuminating quality of fire that the ancients came to look upon it as the Divine agent of the mind, as also of life and motion. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus declared fire to be the foundation of all creation; and throughout the early Vedic writings Agni, the Fire-god, is often invoked as if he were the Creator Himself, but only because he stood as the personified element of life, energy and thought, upon which all creation must rest.

Gradually, however the conception of the term *tapas* underwent a transition. What originally signified only heat and light, or life and knowledge, was now used to mean meditation and concentration of mind—a change which was natural and legitimate, since only by meditation can the highest knowledge be acquired. With this change, the idea of *tapas* took its place in the individual life and came to be applied to any exercise that regulated the mind, cleansed the heart and prepared man for the revelation of the Divine. The Bhagavad-Gita declares: "Worship, charity and the practice of *tapas* are the purifiers of the wise." Every such practice indeed was looked upon as a purifying fire, gradually burning away all the imperfections of man's nature and reducing his diverse selfish desires to one homogeneous ash of God-yearning. Until this oneness was attained there was no chance of the Supreme Vision, since God can only be seen by the pure or single heart. What special form of self-discipline lighted the fire and fed the flame did not matter. Each could choose his own path. In the Gita we are told again:

"To revere and serve the gods, the twice-born, spiritual teachers and wise men; purity, simplicity, continence, non-injury: these are called *tapas* or austerity of the body.

"Speech which causes no pain to anyone and is true as well as pleasant and beneficial; regular study of the Scriptures: these are called *tapas* of speech.

"Cheerfulness of mind, kindliness, silence, self-control, purity of heart: these are called *tapas* of the mind or mental austerity."

No more general rules for the gradual refining and lifting of man's thoughts, words and deeds could be framed. They call for no special condition, environment or constitution. They can be practised as well in the counting-house as in the Sanctuary. They are fitted to men of every grade of develop-

ment and in every walk of life; hence none need be exempt from observing them. And this is invariably true when the real spirit of religion prevails. The spiritual teaching at such times is always direct, inclusive and free from extremes. Men are admonished to follow the middle path, to be "moderate in their eating and diversion, moderate in their activities, moderate in their sleep and wakefulness"; and sharp distinctions between different stations or modes of life grow faint. Godliness is a universal quality which has small concern with rank or circumstance. The Divine Presence is no more accessible in a cloister than by the family hearthside. The forest and the crowded street are one to the man who has perceived It. Only when the letter begins to dominate the spirit do wide differences arise, and men in order to set themselves off from their fellowmen begin to elaborate and distort their religious practices until self-torture becomes a glory.

In the history of every faith we find these periods when penances, flagellations, and painful vigils marked the measure of piety. Many such waves have passed over India—as over Europe in the Middle Ages—but the Vedanta has never upheld such excesses as useful to man or pleasing to God. It offers no encouragement to this spirit of self-torment; on the contrary, it condemns it in unmistakable terms. It cannot conceive of a Deity who could find pleasure in seeing His children expend their energies in self-inflicted miseries. It believes that life itself and our own untrained natures provide opportunity enough for self-discipline. Wise restraint of the senses and the mind; forgetfulness of self through righteous works; prayer and meditation: these are the simple and safe means it offers for attaining realization. Pain and suffering undoubtedly have their part in our unfolding; but when we create them through self-sought austerities, too often we feed our egotism and vanity and thus defeat our purpose. The

ultimate attribute of the Supreme is blissfulness; and spiritual growth is a growth in joyousness. It is measured not by intensity of struggle, but by the gradual elimination of all struggle, as man's nature is purged and unified through selfless consecrated service to the Ideal. "The mortal who has reached the Supreme Being rejoices, because he has found what is a cause for rejoicing," Yama tells Nachiketas in the Katha-Upanishad. Any method which leads us through the shadow instead of out into the sunshine, which does violence to any part of our being and hence weakens rather than strengthens, is not a sound method, nor can it be effective. Rather let us remember the Lord's promise in the Gita: "He who is without any other thought but Me, who remembers Me daily and constantly, by that ever-devoted Yogi I am easily attained."

REPORTS.

Swami Paramananda is continuing his work in Los Angeles. On January 21st he began a course of public lectures in Music Hall. His subjects for the two remaining Sundays of the month were "India's Message to the World" and "Krishna and His Teaching." During February they will be "Buddha and His Teaching," "Emerson and Vedanta," "Spiritual Healing and Vedanta," and "Spiritual Preparedness." Besides these public meetings, he is holding regularly at the Vedanta Centre, 1071 South Hoover St., a Devotional Service every Sunday morning at 11 o'clock, and a mid-week class on Wednesday at 8.

A new and valuable booklet by Swami Paramananda has just been published by the Centre under the title, "Universal Ideal of Religion." It contains three chapters, the first on the "Universal Ideal," the second on "Tolerance" and the third on "Spiritual Culture, the Vital Need of This Age." It sets forth with force and clearness the broad inclusive attitude of Vedanta, and will surely do much to break down the sectarian prejudice and narrow-mindedness which many people mistake for religious fervor.

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MORALITY AND SPIRITUALITY.

Extract by Swami Saradananda.

Can there be any high philosophy or religion possible without a high standard of morals? The answer which the Vedanta gives to this question is always in the negative. No one can rise to the highest stage of spirituality without being perfectly and absolutely pure and high in point of morality. Examine the lives of the Vedic Rishis ("the Seers of thoughts") who attained to superconsciousness; or of Buddha, or Christ, or Sankara, or Chaitanya; were they pure or impure men? Has God ever manifested Himself through an impure channel? Never. These founders of the different religions have always been men pure in thought, word and deed; and what did they teach, every one of them? That morality must be the basis, the foundation, upon which spiritual life should stand; it must be the corner-stone of the spiritual building. Here the Vedic Rishis and all the Prophets of other religions are at one. The one great point of the teachings of the Vedanta, however, is that man's spiritual evolution does not stop with the evolution of a high code of ethics alone, but that there is another higher step to which he can reach, another link in this process of evolution and involution which completes the circle. And this is to be gained, not by denying, but by the fulfilling of all laws; not by throwing overboard

all duties, but by the right performance of all duties; not by discarding society, but by being useful members of it; not by contracting the self, but by expanding it to its farthest limit; not by a man's thinking of himself as a cut and dried entity separate from the universe, but by feeling and realizing that he is one with this universe.

This universe according to Ramanuja, the great leader of the Qualified Monists in India, has been produced by the contraction of the knowledge of the soul, by the soul's forgetting that it is the storehouse of all knowledge and bliss and that it is one with the Infinite Ocean of Knowledge, which forms the background of the universe and is called God, the Absolute, Brahman, Atman, by so many different names. And liberation is to be attained by the expansion of the knowledge of the soul, when it will feel its union with the Divine and with the universe, which is nothing but a projection out of the Divine. Monism goes only a step further than the position of Ramanuja and teaches that perfect liberation is to be attained when the individual soul will not only feel this union and see the unity in the sum-total of all these differentiations, but will feel its identity with the Deity. This stage the Vedanta describes as the state of realization or the superconscious. The three states of the human mind,—the subconscious, the conscious, and the superconscious, are not three distinct minds, but the three different stages of one and the same mind. Modern science has discovered the process in the theory of evolution,—how the subconscious develops into the middle plane, the conscious existence, and the Vedanta is one with it as far as it goes; but it says further that this leaves the evolution (or as the Vedanta says, the involution) incomplete; the conscious will have to develop into the superconscious, and then alone will the process be complete. All our struggles, individual, social and human, are for that end,

trying to gain that higher stage. There alone will man find the permanent basis of ethics, of religion, of everything. There, if an illiterate man enters, he will come out a sage, a prophet. The founders of the different religions, the religious giants whom the world has produced and will produce in the future, have been and will be men who have raised and will raise themselves to this higher stage. This is the stage which was described by Buddha as *Nirvana;* by Christ as being one with the Father; by the Mohammedan Sufis as *Analhak,* union with the truth; and in the famous aphorisms of the Vedanta as "Thou art that Infinite Ocean of Knowledge and Bliss," or "I am that Absolute Brahman."

The universe according to the Vedanta is one indivisible whole. It is by mistake that we think ourselves separate from the rest of the world. In the external world our bodies represent so many different points in the one vast ocean of matter, in which there is no break. Behind that lies expanded the one universal ocean of mind, in which our minds but represent so many different whirlpools; and behind that even is the Soul, the Self, the *Atman,* the storehouse of all knowledge, power, and bliss. So, though there is but one soul shining above, there are so many millions of reflections on the millions of whirlpools in the mental ocean; and these reflections are nothing but so many individual egos. When a man raises himself to the superconscious, he sees the One Sun that is shining above the mental ocean and he knows that he is not a particular reflection but the Sun himself, who has given rise to all the reflections in the ocean of fine matter called the mind. And where lies the basis of all ethics? In the fact that I am one with and not separate from the universe; that in injuring you I injure myself, in loving you I love myself; in the fact that behind the manifold diversity there is a unity, or, as the Vedantist says, behind these names

and forms there is that one eternal, unchangeable ocean of Knowledge and Bliss which is our real nature. "This universe has been projected out of that Ocean of Bliss Absolute." That Divinity is trying to manifest itself through all these names and forms, and the evolution of nature into higher and higher forms is caused by this struggle of the Divinity within to manifest itself better and better.

Every form or organism is a conduit through which that Divinity is trying to manifest, and all that we need to do is to remove the barriers which obstruct this flow of the Infinite within. With every act of love and sympathy, every performance of duty, every observance of morality, man is trying to go beyond himself by feeling himself one with the universe. He is abnegating his lower self, and does not in this self-abnegation lie the basis of all ethics? Examine all the ethical codes which the world has ever produced and you will find this one great fact taught,—to live up to the higher Self by denying the lower. Consciously or unconsciously, every code of ethics is leading to that. They may not give you adequate reasons why a man shall be moral and deny himself, but are we not thinking according to the laws of logic in every act of reasoning though we may not have read a single page of logic? The Vedanta supplies the reason why we shall be moral, why we shall do good to others, why we shall love all humanity as ourselves. Behind all these varied codes of ethics lurks that one great truth that we are one with the universe.

He who lives up to that one central truth has truly renounced himself. He who does not know this truth but tries to become a perfectly moral man, in thought, word and deed, he too is unconsciously living up to that truth. This word renunciation has got a very bad name nowadays. Yet every religion has enforced it often and often. It is the corner-

stone upon which all religions, all ethics, have been built. Nay, we are practising it every day of our lives, consciously or unconsciously. A man loves his wife, his children, his country, what is he doing all the time? Is he not renouncing himself? True renunciation, which every religion teaches, does not consist in isolating oneself from everything and every being, but in expanding oneself more and more widely, embracing the whole of the universe in oneself by love. For not in isolation or contraction but in expansion consists life and progress; this is the teaching of the Vedanta.

The eyes of my soul were opened, and I beheld the plenitude of God, whereby I did comprehend the whole world both here and beyond the sea, and the Abyss and all things else; and therein did I behold naught save the Divine power in a manner assuredly indescribable, so that through excess of marvelling the soul cried with a loud voice, saying, "This whole world is full of God."

Angela da Foligno.

As people come into subjection to the Spirit of God, and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the word of wisdom that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being.

George Fox.

God hath introduced man as a spectator of Himself and His works; and not only as a spectator, but an interpreter of them. It is therefore shameful that man should begin and end where irrational creatures do. He is indeed rather to begin there, but to end where Nature itself hath fixed our end; and that is in contemplation and understanding.

Epictetus.

THE THREE STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

By Sister Devamata.

In and out through the duality of nature is woven a triplicity; the very two implies a third. There can be indeed no duality without a trinity, because there where the two opposites meet is created a third thing born of the union of the two. Thus we have day and night and the point where they join called twilight. We have sound sleep and waking and the mingling of the two in dream. We have the knower and the object and the result of their union, knowledge. We have the brute and the Divine and that state in which they meet known as the human. All manifestation falls inevitably into one of these three states, which are called in Sanskrit *Tamas, Rajas,* and *Sattwa.* The first is a state of darkness, heaviness, dullness, lethargy—such as we see in the lower forms of animal life; the second is a state of unrest, activity, passion, ambition, self-assertion—the characteristics of the human plane; and the third is a state of calmness, lightness, illumination, serene joy—to be found only on the spiritual plane. In man these three states express themselves as the subconscious, the conscious and the superconscious; and according to the predominance of one or the other does he appear to be a brute, an intellectual and moral being, or a Saint and Seer.

We are in the habit of looking at all things in creation as fixed, predestined to a definite condition; but in reality the whole of Nature is in a state of quivering instability—nowhere a solid mass, nowhere a persisting form, nowhere a dead level. Every atom is perpetually moving, every condition is incessantly changing. Diminish the density of any rigid substance through the application of heat or otherwise and it will pass beyond the range of visibility; congeal or condense the lightest vapor and it will become a solid block. The same holds true

of men. One man is not cut out of a grosser kind of matter, irrevocably condemned to a life of stupidity, ignorance and brutality, while another is made of a finer material with every aptitude for enlightenment. All men are born in the image of the brute, in the image of God, and in the image of that which stands between. All living beings are made of the same elements and possess the same potential powers. One force plays throughout Nature, one substance underlies it; and the endless variation apparent everywhere reduces itself to a question of what direction that force takes and what state that substance is in. We have, each one of us, in our hands at this moment the possibilities of the lowest and the highest. Not one is less well equipped than another, not one is lacking in a single element necessary to ultimate attainment. The only task before us is to realize where we stand; what state has become habitual; and if it is not desirable, to transform it.

Man is that which his consciousness dwells upon. If he falls short of his ideal, he has only to begin to lift his thought up the sliding scale of consciousness from the thing he is to the thing he longs to be. To do this there are no chasms over which he has to leap. His consciousness stretches in one unbroken line from the grossest to the subtlest stratum of his being; and on it he may climb steadily from subconscious through the conscious to the superconscious; from brute to man and from man to God. These different states, however, have not clearly defined areas. No milestone stands to tell us where subconscious ends and conscious begins. As certain thoughts and actions by constant repetition deepen into habits, they drop to the automatic plane; thus yesterday's conscious activity becomes today's subconscious; and in like manner the reasoned effort of the present moment will in time become instinctive. This is Nature's method of releasing man's will-

power from the dulling routine of his lower being, that he may push on to higher realms.

The upward process, however, must be a continuous one. We cannot jump suddenly from the state of *Tamas* or heaviness to the state of *Sattwa* or illumination. And this rule applies not only to our general evolution, but also to our daily practice. When we feel overpowered by dullness or depression, it is futile to combat it by trying to meditate. We must first rouse our vital energies by some active exertion. Then when we have driven out *Tamas* by *Rajas,* we are ready to sit down and become reflective. To the great majority the third and highest state is practically unknown. Their life consists almost wholly in ceaseless reactions between *Tamas* and *Rajas,* that is, from over-activity to weariness and back to over-activity. This is true both in work and in play. Usually when people feel the need to relax they go outside, they move towards the circumference; only the wise man turns inward and moves towards the centre. They seek their recreation in restless excitement, mingling with the crowd; he finds his in the quiet places, communing with the hidden things of life and Nature. It is the direction of these daily reactions which differentiates the sage from the foolish man. As human beings we stand midway between the two poles of existence; at every moment we can reach out either towards God or towards the brute. The wise man turns Godward for replenishment, the foolish man turns earthward.

To learn to control and direct these reactions is one of the primary lessons in our spiritual education. We must first check all extremes. Elation and depression, feverish activity and lethargy, both represent unbalance, hence weakness. We must set our will firmly at the middle point and govern the swing of the pendulum into rest and action. Until we can do this we shall have no real strength or joy in living. It

is not the man who is swaying and catching himself who feels pleasure in exercise, but the one who has found his balance and moves securely. If we grow weary and feel the need of renewal, we should seek it on the higher plane. When we are overcome with intense weariness, if we will remind ourselves that we are not the body and turn our thoughts from it, we shall quickly react. The body represents *Tamas* or heaviness in us, that is why it weights us. Therefore when it begins to drag, we should learn to drop it from our consciousness as we do at the time of sleep. The same refreshment will follow. Naturally this cannot be done all at once. It will come only as the result of practice, through the cultivation of a higher state of consciousness. We live now too much in the subconscious. Our chief concern is to make this body comfortable, to shelter, feed and clothe it. Think how many hours and days and weeks of each year this Western world spends in dressing and playing with this body as a child dresses and plays with its doll! Yet so long as we make our physical existence the governing principle in all our activity, we are dwelling in the subconscious or brute state; not until we have ceased to identify ourselves with it and have discovered a loftier motive for action shall we rise fully to the human plane.

But here again little rest or peace will come to us. Our mind is a more wearing companion than our body. Desire for pleasure, many interests and ambitions, greed, jealousy, discontent, nameless longing, prod it on to ceaseless motion, making serene thought impossible. We are not wholly absorbed in our own well-being and happiness as we were on the subconscious plane. We are ready to share up to a certain point, but beyond that we feel it our duty to defend our rights and property; so we find ourselves at constant war with something or someone. The plane of *Rajas* is the plane

of struggle and conflict; it throws us back and forth between the contending dualities of pleasure and pain, honor and dishonor, success and failure, until worn and breathless we cry out for relief. As before, our only escape is into a higher state of consciousness; and we reach it, as in the previous upward step, by shifting the point of self-identity, by detaching ourselves from these mental conditions and realizing that our true Self is in no way touched by them. The ocean is always the same mighty ocean whether the surface is lashed to fury or rolls in even swell; so down in the depths of our being the stream of our real life flows ever onward in steady quiet current, undisturbed by the waves and eddies that may stir its surface. The moment we have crossed into the superconscious or meditative realm all the noise of battle ceases and we are at peace.

The subconscious is the plane of sensuality; the conscious, of morality; the superconscious, of spirituality. In the subconscious, instinct guides us; in the conscious, reason; and in the superconscious, revelation or inspiration. The first and third seem unerring, the second full of error. Why? Because in the highest and lowest there is oneness or unity. The Cosmic will works unimpeded through the brute and through the Saint. In ordinary man self-consciousness enters in and the one is broken into two, hence every light brings a shadow which bewilders and misleads. Yet the very effort to distinguish between reality and unreality gradually develops the power of discrimination and converts the brute into a moral being. Then as he learns to efface himself for his neighbor and his neighbor's neighbor, the horizon of his self-consciousness gradually expands until it embraces the whole universe, he comes "to see his Self in all beings and all beings in his Self," and he returns to voluntary oneness with the whole. His eye grows single, there where he saw diversity he now

sees unity, and his being becomes full of light—the light of superconscious illumination.

Man was not meant to be a brute, he was not meant to be human, he was meant to be Divine. It is by our own choice that we grope our way along in our present state of unknowingness, seeing all things dimly. If we will but make the effort, we may in this very life gain the power of unerring vision. It must be done, however, by a gradual transformation not only of our inner nature, but of our outer environment. The process of purification must be both exterior and interior. Since through all Nature there run these three qualities of *Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas,* we must strive to relate ourselves everywhere to the highest *Sattwika* element of purity, goodness and light. Food is recognized as an effective factor in accomplishing this; but food in this case does not signify merely the nutriment we give to our body; it also includes that which we give to our mind, our heart, our whole organism. It is what we eat, what we read, the association we seek, the desires we cherish.

As a good mechanic is careful to select an oil that does not clog his machine, so we should choose a physical diet that does not overweight our system. As much as possible animal food should be eliminated. Among vegetables, it is said that those which grow in the earth are the most *Tamasika* in their nature and those that grow above ground are more *Rajasika,* while fruits and foods which need not be cooked are the most *Sattwika.* There can be no fixed rule of diet for all; it must be modified according to the individual constitution and circumstance. We must observe the effects of different foods upon us and take that which gives strength without destroying the sense of lightness. We must also consider what fits us best for our special task. We should not choose to induce a certain state in us merely because it is desirable, without

regard to our position in the world. If we are free to devote our time to spiritual study and lead a retired life, we can safely cultivate more of the element of *Sattwa* in our system; but the average man and woman, who are in close contact with the world, need some *Tamas* or density just as a ship needs ballast. They should have a larger supply of *Rajas* or vital energy; and if with these they can acquire by meditation and earnest study a predominance of *Sattwa,* they will do their work with a speed, efficiency and understanding impossible to the man weighted by *Tamas* or rendered unsteady by an excess of *Rajas.* They will also possess such poise and quietness that they will reduce waste to a minimum and suffer less from fatigue.

This superior state, however, is not gained by any method of exclusion or destruction. As nothing goes out of a dark room when a light is turned on, so no part of our nature is destroyed when we attain illumination. It is not a question of exchanging one kind of consciousness for another, but of extending our dominion over the whole area of consciousness. We must recover control over the subconscious, which now acts almost wholly independent of our volition; and we must lay hold of the superconscious. The subconscious mind is seated in all the nerve ganglia of the body and we govern it by regulating our sense-reactions. No impression can enter through our sense-gates except by our consent. It is we who record our sensations, they do not record themselves. A picture may form on our retina, but if we block the perceptive organ behind, we shall see nothing; or if we look at it, yet check the reaction of the nerve, there will be no reflex motion. The same is true of sound. Usually when a noise disturbs us, we fix our attention upon it and increase its power tenfold. If, on the contrary, we withdrew our attention and turned it resolutely elsewhere, we would soon cease to hear it.

By the same method we can rise above pain or any distracting sensation. We have a striking example of this when we are deeply absorbed in a book or swept by some strong emotion. Often people who have been unable to move a limb without acute suffering have been known to run from a burning building without the least feeling of discomfort. The man who is completely master of his subconscious mind sees, hears, feels only what he chooses. Every sensation and its corresponding reflex action are entirely under the command of his will.

The preliminary steps in meditation, such as the practice of posture and breath-control, have as their aim the release of the subconscious faculties. Until they are wholly free from distraction, we shall find it difficult to withdraw into the inner recesses of our being. The next step is the subjugation of the conscious mind. With nearly everyone this is now weak because it is used only in fragments. Very few can put the whole of it into any one mental or physical act. Hence the need of concentration. So long as one filament hangs loose, catching at chance objects, there cannot be an even united flow of thought and no meditation is possible. When, however, perfect stillness of body and mind frees the entire stream of consciousness, the momentum gained is so great that it quickly carries us into *Samadhi* or superconsciousness. Gradually with the increase of *Sattwa* in our nature, the meditative state will become habitual; then, however incessant the outer demands upon us, our thought will remain in unbroken contact with the Divine.

It is not by changing our life, but by infusing into it this quality of light and serenity that we shall become spiritual. Our inclinations, however, are not a safe guide in doing this. On the contrary they will unfailingly mislead us. When we are in a state of *Tamas* or lethargy, through despondency or

discouragement, our desire will be to lie down or sit idly brooding. What we should do is to keep steadily active until the heaviness is worked off. That is the secret of travel as a remedy for grief or melancholy. When on the other hand we are over-nervous, our craving will be for excitement, change, a multiplication of engagements and duties. Persons of this temperament should seek in every way to simplify their life and leave many spaces in their daily routine. Whenever we find ourselves hurrying unduly, it is an excellent exercise to sit down, close the eyes, fold the hands, and swing to the central point of stillness, if only for a moment. No time will be lost; the poise gained will enable us to save that and many more minutes. The same remedy may be applied when we observe that we are moving noisily, overturning and breaking, or growing impatient and irritable. It indicates that there is too much *Rajas* in our system and we should check it by a voluntary exercise in quietness. The practice, advised in Karma-Yoga, of pausing for a Godward thought before each undertaking is a great corrective for nervous over-activity.

We may not derive the same immediate satisfaction in adopting this course that we gain from following our present natural tendencies; but all education consists in deflecting the thought into higher channels, and it is as important to cultivate a taste for the right state of body and mind as for good art, good music or good literature. Also in the training of children, an understanding of these three *Gunas* or qualities will prove invaluable, for by a counteracting choice of playmates, games, books and studies we can gently modify their nature and save them many later struggles. No one who has experienced the deep delight of the state of *Sattwa* or illumination, when the whole organism is in perfect balance, every fibre charged with subtle power, can doubt the blessing of it.

The very body becomes transformed and luminous. This is the reason for painting the Saints and Saviours with a halo or nimbus. An effulgence actually emanates from them, which is perceptible to those "who have eyes to see." But it is not their peculiar property. All men may possess it. When through meditation and steadfast practice the whole consciousness has been purified and lifted, it becomes as a radiant path along which every living being may travel to the loftiest heights of God-Vision.

In the presence of that Light one becomes such, that never could one consent to turn from it to any other sight. Because the Good is therein wholly gathered.

Dante.

THE INNER VISION.

Bengalee Hymn.

O my mind, meditate thou upon the Lord, the Essence of Spirit, upon Him who is spotless and free from taint.

Unequalled is His Glory, of untold charm is His form; dear is He ever to the hearts of His devotees.

Behold, His Beauty grows in wonder by fresh outpourings of Love! It putteth in the shade the lustre of a million moons! Verily, the lightning flasheth out from His Radiant Beauty and the Blessed Vision filleth the soul with delight.

Worship His Holy Feet on the lotus of thy heart.

Gaze upon the Blessed Form of matchless beauty, while thy thought is at peace and thine eyes quickened by Love Divine.

Inspired by pure Love, be immersed, O my mind, in the sweetness of Him who is the Fountain of Absolute Intelligence and Bliss.

AIDS TO MEDITATION.

Class Talk by Swami Paramananda.

Before we can take up any spiritual practice the mind must become well established in the fundamental ethical principles, such as non-injuring, non-stealing, truthfulness, continence, external and internal purity, contentment, control of the senses, study of the Scriptures and self-surrender. This means that we must not give way to jealousy, anger, hatred or unkindness by thought, word or action; we must not covet or envy; we must speak the truth fearlessly; we must observe chastity, inner and outer cleanliness and self-restraint; and we must be faithful in our higher study and in devotion to our Ideal. Until these are firmly fixed in the heart, no amount of outer practice can help us; for the foundation must be right before we can construct a solid building, and the building of our character or spiritual structure can never be solid unless we are well grounded in these moral qualities. They are also essential to tranquillity of mind, for unless we can look within and find ourselves above reproach, we can never enjoy peace or serenity. Christ said: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." If we have anything in our life that is not in accordance with our spiritual principles, no amount of sitting still and trying to meditate will bring us the blessing of contemplation.

The next step is the practice of posture; that is, one must learn to sit properly. You may ask: "What can that have to do with our spiritual progress?" We imagine that we can sit in any way we wish, but that is not true. Unless the mind is balanced, we cannot sit still even for a few seconds; also if our body is not in a good condition the mind

cannot help thinking of it and it is difficult for it to gain absolute tranquillity. The idea of posture, therefore, is to acquire firmness of both mind and body. We learn to sit in a manner in which we are less conscious of our physical existence, thus our mind is not dragged down by the weight of the body and it more easily grows calm. One who has not proper control over his body cannot make proper use of his mind, he can never concentrate—much less can he meditate. A man who lacks mastery over the physical organism cannot possibly gain spiritual consciousness; hence the need to practise posture.

In the beginning we may have to force the body to be still. We do this by making up our mind that for a certain length of time we shall hold our body in a certain position with balance and stability. By doing this from day to day we overcome physical restlessness as well as physical lethargy. How often we feel overpowered by our bodily conditions, the body does not want to do a thing and at once we yield. Perhaps it does not feel well and so we sacrifice our spiritual study. This means that the body is proving its supremacy over the mind, which should never be. The practice of posture will help us to gain control of the body so that it will not interfere with our mind, and we can become less conscious of our physical and more conscious of our spiritual nature. The chief suggestion with regard to posture is to hold the spinal column in an easy, erect position, for we find that most of the conditions of ill-health arise from disorders in the spinal column. The flow of the life-force or *Prana* and the breath also have much to do with the position of the spine. Unless it is properly held, neither the breathing nor the circulation of the nerve currents can be normal. There are people who are not used to sitting straight and at first it will be very difficult for them; but after a little effort it will become easy and

natural and then the mind will have greater freedom to think. When we have learned to hold ourselves in an erect, easy, natural way, the mind will be able to go upward. As long as the body keeps moving we cannot focus and elevate our thought. We know that a telescope needs to be steady before we can focus the lens and observe the stars or planets; similarly these instruments of body and mind must be steady before we can have clear inner vision. *Asana* or posture means a steadfast feeling. We feel no wavering anywhere; our body is well established, our mind is well established, neither can drag us down, so we acquire a state of perfect equilibrium.

Breath is the next thing to be considered. "What can breath have to do with our spiritual development?" you may ask again. Breath is life. It is the medium through which the life current flows into us, permeating our whole being and sustaining us. We know that a person has ceased to live, that the life current is no longer working in him when he has lost the power to breathe, and we say that "he has breathed his last." Now we breathe automatically, involuntarily, unconsciously; we must learn to breathe consciously, properly and rhythmically. Through breath alone we can create such a rhythm within the body that it will restore health. *Pranayama* means controlling the life-force by controlling the breath. When we understand how to do this, we can fill ourselves with *Prana* or life-force and eliminate all impurities. We all breathe, but we do not derive the proper benefit from our breathing. This is because we do not consciously regulate our breath. Breath is controlled by thought. If we observe, we shall see that whenever our mind is very restless, our breathing becomes irregular. Also when the body is ill, the breath becomes disordered. It is because we have lost the rhythm, everything is thrown out of balance and the result is

a disturbance in both our physical and mental health. To avoid this, the Yogis tell us to cultivate the habit of rhythmic breathing and this will enable us to store up the vital energy we have within us. When our inhaling and exhaling become even, it affects us just like a musical rhythm, creating harmony throughout our system.

After these preparatory steps, the next is to make the mind introspective. It is all very well to have someone tell us to look within, that only there shall we realize the Truth; but how to go within? We cannot do it suddenly, because of the hold the body has over us. Our mind also is divided and claimed by many things. To detach ourselves from our bodily conditions and make our mind one-pointed requires a long struggle. Sometimes we grow discouraged and want to give up; but those are the moments when we must hold firmly and not let our spirit be depressed or allow ourselves to fall back. Arjuna says to Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita: "How can I ever expect to realize these wonderful truths when the mind is so fickle, unyielding and turbulent?"; and Sri Krishna replies: "Do not be depressed; even this mind which seems so unyielding and difficult to subdue, will become your slave through constant practice of dispassion and discrimination." Intensity of purpose is what brings concentration. When we really feel devoted to an Ideal, then nothing can hold us back; we shall surmount every difficulty. At first we may have to make a great effort, but if we really yearn for spiritual things, our mind will naturally become single. Singleness is what we want. The ideal of Yoga and of all philosophy and religion is to make the mind single, the heart single, the purpose single; for all Sages and Seers recognize that in this singleness lies the whole secret of realization. Christ says that the eye and heart must be single before we can see God or Truth.

Holding the mind to one point means controlling all the

waves or modifications which rise on its surface. You know that in order to put a thread through the eye of a needle, you have to twist the thread into a point; if you do not, it is a difficult task to put it through. Similarly the mind which has become divided through its varied interests must be made single before it can penetrate into the depths of our being. This does not necessarily mean that we cannot take interest in other things, that we must give up everything; singleness means that whatever we undertake we are able to put our whole force into it, and through this concentrated energy we see more clearly and accomplish things more quickly. Concentrating our mind on ordinary external objects, however, gives us only limited results; but when we can direct our thought on inner spiritual objects:—on infinite strength, infinite wisdom, infinite love or purity; on the effulgent flame of life seated in the heart; on anything through which the current of Divine life is running; we find that our mind becomes quickened, all its latent qualities are awakened. The mind takes the color of whatever it dwells upon and by bringing it in contact with spiritual things it becomes purified and strengthened.

We must not think that the aim of these spiritual practices is to gain a little bit of physical health or a little bit of mental power; their main object is to make the soul free. Freedom means completeness, no lack anywhere—no lack of knowledge, no lack of power, no lack of anything. Before we can realize this and release the soul from bondage, we must go through certain practices in order to form fixed spiritual habits and entirely wipe out past impressions. We have to choose the ideal upon which to concentrate according to our own individual need or inclination. One cannot go contrary to his natural spiritual instinct. Whether we recognize it or not, we have within ourselves a spiritual instinct just as

we have a physical instinct, and this spiritual instinct must be our guide in choosing our Ideal. Having chosen, we must follow this Ideal in spite of failures, in spite of obstructions in the way; day by day we must hold it before us; and if we forget it we must bring our mind back to it. In this way the mind grows unwavering and one-pointed, we can easily follow a thought without interruption and meditation becomes possible.

No one else can give us an adequate idea of what meditation is, of the value or the ecstasy of it; we can never know until we ourselves taste it. Then only does the soul become wakeful, become itself, enter into its own element. Why is it we suffer? Because we come in contact with so many things that are not in harmony with our real nature. Meditation eliminates all such foreign elements from our thoughts. But this practice of exclusion is not to make us more narrow and bound, but to help us collect our forces. Whenever we have an unusual task we always try to store up our energies and have a reserve to call upon. So before we undertake the practice of meditation, we must have so collected and stored our forces that we shall not be wanting in strength, either physically or mentally. Often people fail to realize a desired end because of the lack of collectedness in body and mind. So Patanjali, the great teacher of Yoga, tells us that we must protect ourselves from the very outset. If we neglect to make the foundation strong, the superstructure cannot be satisfactory. Many people do not gain spiritual vision because they have not paid proper attention to the preliminary stages. When we are well established in our first practices, then the other things will come naturally. This higher study not only deals with the spiritual nature, it also deals with our human nature. We must discipline and gain mastery over the whole of our being. But we must do everything gradually. This is one of the great things we must bear in mind. We must not be im-

patient and overdo. What we need in all practice is moderation; then we shall go steadily forward, doing each day a little more according to our capacity. We must not put too much pressure either on our body or mind; but if we are patient and persevering, soon we shall find that things which seemed impossible to conquer have been conquered.

This life is not a matter of a few seconds. It did not spring just from this little beginning; it has had a past and it will have a future, so there is no need for undue hurry. If we have imperfections, we can overcome them; and whatever virtues we possess, we did something to earn them and we can earn more. Understanding this, we should strive to take up these practices and do them with perseverance and an undepressed heart; then we shall gradually overcome all obstacles and our mind will grow so powerful that it will never give up. One little glimpse of higher things, one little proof will strengthen our faith on our journey. First we hear about a thing; then we reflect; and after thinking and reasoning, a flash of light comes and proves to us that what we heard is true. Just one little flash is enough to give us confidence to go on; then comes another and then another, until at last the whole truth shines. That is the result of meditation. At first it comes only once in a while. One day perhaps we feel a great calm, a great sense of illumination, then it disappears. Again we persevere and again it comes and remains a little longer. So we go on forming the habit until some day it comes and stays with us. But this is only possible through habitual meditation. To make it a permanent factor in our life we must practise steadily.

During thirty years I sought for God, and when at the end of that time I opened my eyes, I found that He was seeking me. *Bayazid Bistami.*

FROM THE MAITRAYANA—BRAHMANA—UPANISHAD.

As birds and deer do not approach a burning mountain, so evil never approaches those who know Brahman (the Supreme.)

When he who knows has restrained his mind and placed all sense objects far from him, then let him remain without forming conceptions.

What is without thought, though in the centre of thought, what cannot be thought, the hidden, the highest,—let a man merge his thought there; then will this living being be free from attachment.

And when, after the cessation of all mental activity, he sees his own Higher Self, smaller than small and shining, as (one with) The Highest Self, then he becomes selfless, and because he is selfless he is without limit, without cause, absorbed in thought. This is final liberation.

Through the serenity of the thought he kills all (the bondage of) actions, good or bad. His Self serene, abiding in the (Supreme) Self, obtains imperishable bliss.

Meditation should be directed to the Highest Being within; thence the indistinct understanding becomes distinct.

And when the activities of the mind are dissolved, then (is known) that bliss which requires no other witness; that is the Supreme, the Immortal, the Shining One; that is the way, that is the true world.

The shrine which consists of the ether in the heart, the blissful, the highest retreat: that is our own, that is our goal.

After having left behind the body, the organs of sense and the objects of sense; and having seized the bow whose stick is fortitude and whose string is self-discipline; having struck down also this first guardian of the door of Brahman with the arrow which consists of freedom from egotism (for

if man looks at the world egotistically, then taking the diadem of passion, the earrings of greed and envy and the staff of sloth, sleep and sin, and having seized the bow whose string is anger and whose stick is lust, he destroys all beings with the arrow which consists of evil desire)—having therefore killed that guardian, he crosses by means of the *Om* (repetition of the Sacred Name) to the other side of the ether within the heart; and when the ether becomes revealed, he enters slowly, as a miner seeking minerals in a mine, into the Hall of the Supreme. After that let him by means of the instruction of his teacher, break through the shrine of Brahman, which consists of the four nets (food, breath, mind and relative knowledge), until he reaches the last shrine, that of blessedness and identity with God. Thenceforth pure, clean, tranquil, breathless, bodiless, endless, imperishable, firm, everlasting, birthless, independent, he stands on his own greatness, and having seen the Self in its own greatness, he looks on the wheel of the world as one who has alighted from a chariot looks on its revolving wheel.

REPORT.

Swami Paramananda will leave Los Angeles on March 20th and it is expected he will arrive in Boston on the 24th. He will conduct the Sunday Services on the 25th and all the usual meetings thereafter. During his mid-winter season in Los Angeles he gave a successful course of public lectures and held regular Sunday Services and weekly classes at The Vedanta Centre there. These will still be continued by the Sister in residence.

A new and thoroughly revised edition of "Vedanta in Practice" by Swami Paramananda is now in press and will probably be ready before the end of the month. This book presents the practical side of the teaching and is specially useful to those who are beginning the study of it.

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Tyndall.

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RESURRECTION AND IMMORTALITY.

Easter Address by Swami Paramananda.

Know That to be imperishable by which all this is pervaded. None can ever cause the destruction of the Soul who abides within, the Immutable. This body has beginning and end, but the Dweller within this body is deathless. Therefore he who regards the indwelling Soul as perishable does not know its true nature. It is not born nor does it ever die, nor after existing for a time does it go into non-existence. It is unborn and eternal. Though the body may change and perish, the Soul is undying and unchanging. He who knows such to be the nature of the Soul, how can he grieve about anything! Why should he lament over passing conditions, since they do not touch the Soul? As one casts off worn-out garments and puts on new ones, similarly the Soul, casting off worn-out bodies, takes fresher ones for its use. It is not to be pierced by the sword, it cannot be burned by fire, it cannot be wet by water, nor can air dry it. It is impenetrable and indestructible. Knowing this, why should one fear death? All bodies are perishable, but the Dweller within is imperishable; therefore the wise man never grieves or fears.

Thus have the Indo-Aryan Sages and Seers sung regarding the true nature of the Soul. But no amount of mere hearing can convince us, not until we have had a practical proof that

the Soul survives bodily death shall we truly believe. And that is why a Christ must come and rise from the dead to show us that death cannot destroy the True, the Real. Unless man can see this face to face, unless he can have it actually demonstrated, he doubts again and again; and even after he sees, he often forgets. For that reason we have, in all countries and among all religions, certain figures who stand out as having survived death and thus given tangible proof of their immortal nature. The idea of rising from the dead does not appear for the first time in the Christ life. Indian history contains many instances of Saints and Sages who were often seen after they had departed from this body. It is a very old conception and it goes hand in hand with the conception of the immortality of the Soul.

Although, however, there may have been rare instances of Incarnate Teachers actually rising and reassuming the use of their physical bodies, this was possible only because the body had been so spiritualized and brought into such perfect harmony with the Soul that it was no longer subject to the laws governing gross matter. But this cannot apply to the ordinary human being, whose spiritual nature is unawakened and whose body is dense and under the laws of the physical plane. Those, therefore, who interpret the "resurrection of the body" to mean that man will rise as a man of flesh are destined to disappointment; for that idea cannot stand the test of science, logic, or true religion. The body is a composition of material particles and all things that are composed must sooner or later be dissolved; but within this gross body there is another known as the spiritual body, which physical death cannot destroy. When the Soul departs from the physical body, it takes with it this subtle body, which according to Indian psychology consists of *Manas* (mind), *Buddhi* (intellect or reason) and *Ahamkara* (ego). It is this body which rises

from the dead, hence man should strive to know this subtle principle of his being and learn to identify himself with this rather than with his outer form.

In the early stages of our Soul evolution, it is difficult for us to separate our spiritual life from our physical life. Even when we seek spiritual consciousness, it is in order to demonstrate something through the body and for the benefit of the body. But this body is only the dwelling-place of Something more vital, and until we gain knowledge of That, we cannot know the true use and purpose of life. We must not let our consciousness be buried in the grave of matter. It should rather rest in that Higher Principle within man which is indestructible. We are told this again and again, yet when death comes we shudder before it. What is the cause of all such fear? False perception, ignorance. Our life is centred in the body, and our bodily consciousness so overpowers our spiritual nature that we cannot imagine the existence of anything apart from our physical being. True resurrection means rising out of this grave of ignorance before we are separated from this body. When we have had even a glimpse of our True Self, then death can never again touch us. Christ manifested this. He was so convinced of the immortality of His Soul that He had no fear when death confronted Him. Death, from which every created being instinctively shrinks, He embraced easily, because He knew that for the real man dying was no more than a change of garment. The outer garment might fall, but the inner garment of the Soul could not be destroyed on the cross. Knowing this, he did not try to escape from what we call death. We find the same thing in the lives of other great Teachers,—Socrates, for example. Having absolute faith in his immortal nature and in that subtle body which does not perish with physical death, he was most willing to give up this coarser garment of flesh.

Until we are in the same way conscious of a spiritual body within us, we cannot transcend the grave. Do not think that all people will rise from the tomb at the Day of Judgment, as it is generally believed. Only those who have a clear conception of their spiritual Self rise, but others who cling to matter do not. They will remain bound by their self-created chains until the beginning of a new cycle, when they will take up again the thread of life and continue their evolution. You have heard also of earth-bound spirits. No supernatural power holds them to this plane; it is their own ignorance. The physical body seems the only real thing to them; and even after they are forced by death to leave it, they still cling to it. But nothing they can do will change its perishable nature, and when the Soul cannot detach itself, it suffers untold miseries. That which is unreal will always remain unreal; that which is fleeting can never become everlasting; merely because man takes one thing for another and gives a wrong name to it cannot alter the truth.

This Easter feast teaches us a wonderful lesson. It is celebrated in almost every country. Others may not call it by the same name, but everywhere it is a feast signifying resurrection or the coming of new life. As nature bursts forth into blossom after the long dead winter, similarly man must rise with fresh vigor and strive to manifest new life. All such festivals are symbolic. If we do not understand their real significance and merely observe them by dressing the body in fresh garments and attending a religious service, we miss their purpose. It is true that this body is the temple of God, and because it is the temple of the Infinite, Indestructible, Immortal Self, we must cherish and care for it. Fresh outer garments and freshness in external environment no doubt help in giving us a fresh impetus to spiritual growth, and so far they are good. But we should not forget the deeper meaning of these feast

days. What is the real lesson that Christ by his rising sought to teach? That man, the true man, is the son of God; hence he is immortal, indestructible, and he must prove it by transcending death. Our consciousness is now buried in our material interests; we must dig down beneath this physical life until we touch our spiritual nature and let that blossom forth. Such is the true lesson of Easter. It comes anew each year to remind us that we must not cling to this life which is so perishable, but we must gain a consciousness of that within us which survives all bodily dissolution. The Aryan Sages deny death. They declare to all men: "Children of Immortal Bliss, why have you forgotten your Divine nature? Do not remain buried in ignorance. Follow the path, realize your true Self, and you will find Everlasting Life."

No one can give us immortality; we must attain it for ourselves. If we always worship Mammon and cherish the body, forsaking the Soul, what have we? We may gain the wealth of this entire universe, but it will dwindle into nothingness unless we have possession of the God-part in us. It is the Infinite that we must try to inherit. We are by birthright heirs to that Infinite, but we do not know it. Why? Because our mind has become so enshrouded in matter that Soul consciousness is for us an alien consciousness. Yet only when we are sincerely striving for spiritual consciousness do we truly live the spiritual life. It does not matter how many times we fall, God knows our heart, and He rewards us according to the spirit within us. If our spirit is earnest and full of yearning, He will give us all that we need for our highest growth. The spiritual life must be lived side by side with our material life. We should never set aside our Soul, for our condition here and hereafter is wholly according to our spiritual unfoldment. All people do not meet the same end. There are some who rise above death here in this body, and there are others who cannot

sever themselves from their bodily consciousness even after they have entered the grave. It is most important for us to detach ourselves from this clinging to matter before we die. If there is any spiritual freedom or real happiness to come after death, we should try to make it ours here and now.

It is not true that after this life we shall find eternal life. Life is eternal now. Immortality does not begin after the grave. Then you may say, "What is the need of struggling for it?" Because, unless we free our mind while we are living here and make it a true instrument with which to gain God-Vision, it will prove a drawback to us after death. We must realize the existence of our subtle body in this life. The ordinary body must die, because it is a combination of earth, water, ether, air and fire; and these elements, now held together by the Soul, fall apart when it is gone. But that other subtle body is less destructible, because it is nearer the effulgent Spirit of man and the effulgent Spirit of man is part of God. Man does not need to go outside to find Godhood; on the contrary, he can never perceive the Divine in the external until he has seen It within himself. There are many ways by which we can purify our hearts and thus revive the Spirit of God within us. Service, self-abnegation, meditation, one-pointed devotion to an Ideal all help. Actually we are struggling every minute to manifest this Divine Spirit, but we go in the wrong direction. We cling to mere shadows, for this phenomenal world is full of shadows; and the result is painful, because the shadows must vanish. Let us find the Real! This is the mission of Christ and of all great Saviours or Seers—to show us the Real, to help us believe in a world which is invisible to us in our days of ignorance, and to make that world real to us, that we may enjoy the bliss of God-consciousness while still in thc body. May the Spirit of Christ, of Buddha, of all the Great Ones inspire us to realize our immortal birthright here and now! Such is the earnest prayer of my heart.

HEAVEN AND TRUE HAPPINESS.

Class Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Whenever any exertion is made the end is happiness. Happiness is the goal of all living beings, animals and men. But the ordinary happiness of the world will never satisfy man. Nowhere in creation can he find lasting satisfaction, not even if he rises to the highest Heaven. Only when he has gone beyond all the Heavens can he hope to escape from the revolving wheel of birth and death. What is Heaven? It is not a place where man realizes his perfect nature. My Master, Sri Ramakrishna, used to tell us that there are chains of iron and chains of gold, but both are chains and bind. Heaven is the chain of gold which binds man and does not allow him true freedom in any way. Yet when man puts the question to himself whether he wants to be a slave or to be free, the answer always comes that he wants to be free. A slave is never happy, for at every moment he is at the command of the master; and just when he is enjoying most, he may be called away to do something else. But if we are not free in Heaven, why should we seek it? Is there no other way that we can find freedom? Vedanta says "Yes"; and it shows us how we may attain, not an impermanent Heaven, but everlasting blissfulness.

Sense pleasure, even the highest, can never be eternal, because all the senses are perishable. For this reason pleasures that come through the senses are invariably accompanied by fear of loss and that prevents real enjoyment. Man runs after sense pleasure because he does not know that he has within himself all happiness. His desire is based on ignorance and whatever is based on ignorance we should avoid. If we study the different descriptions of Heaven, we readily see that it is only a place of continued festivities or enjoyments. Therefore Heaven should never be our ideal, for the Scriptures tell us that we must overcome all desire for enjoyment, whether in

this world or the next. Salvation does not consist in going to Heaven. It consists in realizing that "I am God's child," if I am a dualist; or that "I am one with God," if I am a monist. So long as happiness is sought in that which perishes, it will never be found. Happiness is in you. You take a sweetmeat because you think that in eating it you will be happy; yet the enjoyment that comes from it is not in it, but in you. You seek that which harmonizes with your nature; you try to avoid that which does not harmonize. When you find something that harmonizes, you say you are happy; when you come in contact with something that does not harmonize, you feel unhappy.

Man is a combination of matter and spirit. Matter, because it is limited and changeable, breeds unhappiness; and when man's material nature asserts itself, he becomes unhappy. When, on the contrary, he is able to detach himself from his material being by discovering his true nature, then matter has no more power over him and nothing can make him unhappy. It was thus that Christ could pray for His enemies when on the cross. Those who reach this state never get angry, they never wish to do harm to anyone; they even regard those who injure them as friends. If you study yourself, you will find that you are naturally happy. It is because you mistake your nature that you become unhappy. Instead of identifying yourself with spirit, you have identified yourself with matter, with your bodily conditions, and for that reason you feel yourself miserable and unfortunate. To save you from this mistake the Great Teachers all try to make you realize that you are pure and perfect.

Man is a curious mixture and this is the cause of the many struggles through which he has to pass. If you put a lion and a bull in the same cage—the one carnivorous, the other herbivorous—they will fight until one or the other is killed. So

the lion and the bull in man make constant strife, which will only end when spirit has completely overcome matter. When man will free himself entirely from the thraldom of body and mind, then alone will he know true happiness. Nothing in the universe will ever be able to shake him then, because he will have risen above fear and desire. How many gallons of water are poured into the ocean in a day, yet it remains the same. So no matter how many bow down before such a man, no matter how many may persecute him, it will make no impression on him; he will remain unmoved.

In order to attain this state, you must practise self-purification. By discrimination you must distinguish the real from the unreal. You must not be credulous. You must examine and analyze for yourself and separate right from wrong. Then you must take the right and throw away the wrong. If you will observe the world and yourself, you will find out that all is constantly changing, even your body and mind. The body changes perceptibly, mind also; but you do not change. When you look within, you see that the "I" who was a schoolboy, then a youth, then a man, has not changed; so you have come to know that whereas the body's nature changes and the mind's nature, your nature does not change. Thus by careful observation you learn that you are the only changeless entity in all this changing world. So long, however, as you identify yourself with the body and mind, you must also change; because through this identification you have become one with the world, the mind and the body.

Your duty is to realize through discrimination that you are above change, above death, indestructible; for by doing this you will attain freedom. Freedom is your home towards which you have been struggling through many lives. But as when a man wishes to make a railway journey, he must have money to pay for his ticket; so when you would go to this

home, you must have six sorts of wealth or practise six kinds of purification. You must learn to control the senses and the mind; you must be willing to be ill-treated, villified, persecuted; you must not covet enjoyment and you must have unwavering faith and be steadfast in devotion. By these means you will surely reach the goal. We all have within us the power to discriminate between what will bring happiness and what will bring misery; and this power is the only thing worth having. If a man has wealth and has not discrimination, he will not know how to spend his money intelligently and it may only make him miserable. If a man has learning and lacks discrimination, he will not know how to use his knowledge wisely. But if a man has the discriminative faculty and nothing else, he is still the most fortunate of men, because through it he may attain the loftiest ends.

Buddha's renunciation was the result of the highest discrimination. He found that to go out of the world brought the truest happiness. When He discovered that this earthly life was beset with miseries, disease and death, He said: "Better no life at all than such a life. If life means something which continues in misery to ultimately end in death, rather let me throw such a life away." It was because He had realized the hollowness and transitoriness of worldly joys that He was able to give up His kingdom and become a mendicant. He could no longer rest satisfied in His palace. Earthly power and wealth meant nothing to him. He preferred to go out and seek the higher power, enduring hunger, thirst, privations of every kind to gain His end. Nothing could shake Him, because He was determined to know the Truth. It only shows that man can do anything, if only he has sufficient determination. During that night of final struggle, in the first part Mara tried to terrify Him; in the second part he appealed to His softer nature by assuming the form of His weeping father,

His weeping wife, His helpless child; in the third part He passed through all the Heavens and was offered all the powers, but He threw them all aside. Then He went to *Brahma-loka* or the highest Heaven, and in the last part of the night He attained *Nirvana* or complete illumination.

How was He able to remain firm through all these temptations? Because He never lost His power of discrimination; He never mistook the unreal for the real. Even the delights of the highest Heaven did not turn Him away from His desire to know the Truth. As long as we work for any reward whatever, even to go to Heaven, we cannot attain freedom, for we are still under the sway of ego. But if we can realize that God is all in all and everything else is nothing, then liberation comes easily. For what keeps us from seeing God? Our ego. Egotism is the real hell-fire. The more we can minimize it, the nearer we shall approach the goal. If we can throw it away altogether, then freedom is ours. Therefore the more we can fix our mind on God and forget ourselves and our little desires for enjoyment either here or hereafter, the more quickly shall we reach freedom. There are two ways of going to Heaven; the one is by death, the other by spiritual realization. A man both by living and by dying can go to Heaven. As the ripe cocoanut separates itself from the shell, so if we can learn the secret of separating our Divine Self from all bodily attachments and selfish desires, then we can realize the highest Heaven even in this life.

We make for ourselves our own spiritual world, our own monsters, chimeras, angels. All is marvellous for the poet, all is divine for the saint, all is great for the hero, all is wretched, miserable, ugly and evil for the base and sordid soul.

—*Amiel.*

THE JOY OF GOD-UNION.

Parable by Meister Eckhart.

There was a learned scholar who eight years long desired that God would show him a man who would teach him the Truth. And once when he felt a very great yearning, a voice from God came to him and said: "Go to the church and there shalt thou find a man who will show thee the way to blessedness." And he went and found a poor man whose feet were torn and covered with dust and dirt; and all his clothes were hardly worth three farthings. And he greeted him, saying:

"God give you good day!"

He answered: "I have never had a bad day."

"God give you good luck."

"I have never had ill luck."

"May you be happy! But why do you answer me thus?"

"I have never been unhappy."

"Pray explain this to me, for I cannot understand it."

The poor man answered: "Willingly. You wished me good day. I never had a bad day; for if I am hungry, I praise God; if it freezes, hails, snows, rains, if the weather is fair or foul, still I praise God; am I wretched and despised, I praise God; and so I have never had an evil day. You wished that God would send me luck. But I never had ill luck, for I know how to live with God, and I know that what He does is best; and what God gives me or ordains for me, be it good or ill, I take it cheerfully from God as the best that can be, and so I never have had ill luck. You wished that God would make me happy. I never was unhappy; for my only desire is to live in God's will, and I have so entirely yielded my will to God's will that what God wills, I will."

"But if God should will to cast you into hell," said the learned man, "what would you do then?"

"Cast me into hell? His Goodness forbids! But if He did

cast me into hell, I should have two arms to embrace Him. One arm is true humility; that I should lay beneath Him and be thereby united to His holy humanity. And with the right arm of love, which is united with His holy Divinity, I should so embrace Him that He would have to go to hell with me. And I would rather be in hell and have God, than in Heaven and not have God."

Then the master understood that true abandonment with utter humility is the nearest way to God.

The master asked further: "Whence are you come?"

"From God."

"Where did you find God?"

"When I forsook all creatures."

"Where have you left God?"

"In pure hearts and in men of good will."

The master asked: "What sort of man are you?"

"I am a king."

"Where is your kingdom?"

"My Soul is my kingdom, for I can so rule my senses, inward and outward, that all the desires and powers of my Soul are in subjection; and this kingdom is greater than a kingdom on earth."

"What brought you to this perfection?"

"My silence, my high thoughts, and my union with God. For I could not rest in anything that was less than God. Now I have found God, and in God have eternal rest and peace."

My heart is filled with devotion to Thee, O Sovereign Lord! Do Thou grant me such understanding that I may be able to offer at Thy Feet my humble praise. Thou abidest in all, Thou art all, Thou assumest all Forms; all are from Thee, hence Thou art all, the Soul of all. Glory unto Thee, the Lord of all beings. —*Srimad-Bhagavata.*

THE NECESSITY OF REINCARNATION.

Modern Science postulates the existence of the three ultimate inter-related principles of matter, energy and consciousness. It has also steadily moved towards the conclusion that these three are merely different manifestations of one fundamental reality. And since it has come to recognize that matter and energy are both immortal and indestructible, it is practically driven to acknowledge that the same is true of consciousness. The Vedanta Philosophy has from the outset maintained that there subsists in every form of manifested life an intelligent, immortal entity, which it calls the *Jiva* or individual Soul. This Soul, while capable of self-conscious development and final union with the Absolute, by its own ignorant deeds has become entangled in a continuous cycle of birth, action and death, from which knowledge alone can free it; and because one earth-life cannot suffice to gain that knowledge, it must return again and again to learn its lessons. Thus the nature and destiny of the Soul both necessitate Reincarnation.

It is often urged as an insuperable objection against this doctrine that it is not capable of proof; but what greater proof could there be than the fact that of all theories, it gives the simplest and most satisfactory explanation of created life as we see it? How else can we explain the differences in people even of the same family, or the striking dissimilarities between parents and children? Inherited tendencies cannot account for them, because no trace of like gifts is to be found in the preceding generations; or if found, there is nothing to tell us why one child should inherit a gift rather than another. Why at twelve years of age should Pascal have discovered for himself the greater part of Plane Geometry; or whence came the power that enabled the shepherd Mangiamelo to calculate like an arithmetical machine when only five years old? Mozart, we

know, composed an opera at eight; Rembrandt drew like a master before he could read; and Theresa Milanolla played the violin with such skill that Baillot declared she must have played it before she was born. How was such extraordinary efficiency gained, if not from practice in previous lives?

The German Philosopher Lessing in his treatise on "The Divine Education of the Human Race" writes: "The very same way by which the race reaches perfection must every individual man—one sooner, another later—have travelled over. Have travelled over in one and the same life? . . . But why should not every individual man have existed more than once upon this world? Is this hypothesis so laughable merely because it is the oldest? Because the human understanding, before the sophistries of the schools had dissipated and debilitated it, lighted upon it at once? Why may not even I have already performed those steps of my perfecting which bring men only temporal punishments and rewards? Do I bring away so much from once that there is nothing to repay the trouble of coming back? Is this the reason against it? Or because I forgot that I have been here already? Happy is it for me that I do forget. The recollection of my former condition would permit me to make only a bad use of the present. And that which even I must forget *now,* is that necessarily forgotten for ever? Or is it a reason against the hypothesis that so much time would have been lost to me? Lost? And how much then should I miss? Is not a whole Eternity mine?"

Fichte, Herder and others wrote in the same vein. Schopenhauer says: "Every new-born being comes fresh and blithe into the new existence and enjoys it as a free gift; but there is, and can be, nothing freely given. Its fresh existence is paid for by the old age and death of a worn-out existence which has perished, but which contained the indestructible seed out of which the new existence has arisen; they are one being." Plato

advances the same idea when he concludes a discussion on Metempsychosis with the words: "It thus appears to us that the living proceed from the dead, no less than the dead from the living"; while Pythagoras declares: "The all was an harmonious whole, an ever-living life, a continuing Palingenesis. All has soul. All is soul, wandering in the organic world and obeying eternal will or law, the recognition and accomplishment of which is the salvation and blessedness of man."

The whole idea of Reincarnation not only hinges on the theory of evolution, but supplies its logical completion. If it takes ages for the development of higher animal forms from lower ones, and if such development of the material frame be indicative of the advance towards perfection of the embodied Soul, then surely the unfoldment of all the soul's moral and spiritual possibilities cannot be effected in one lifetime. The moment we admit this higher evolution, reimbodiment of some kind becomes a necessity; for this short span of life is altogether insufficient for man's higher development. Scarcely indeed does he seem to begin it here. According to Henry Drummond, his evolution is not progress in matter, for matter cannot progress. "It is a progress in spirit, in that which is limitless"; and this requires unlimited opportunity and unlimited experience, hence a multiplicity of lives in which to exhaust the educational possibilities of this plane. It is here that Karma or the Law of Cause and Effect enters in to determine the Soul's course. Since this Law of Causation presides over the economy of the entire universe, it must be the governing principle also in human affairs; and a man's destiny is wholly shaped by the forces which he himself sets in motion. In other words, out of his own thoughts and deeds is spun the thread of his life.

The misery and happiness allotted to him is in exact proportion to his good or evil actions. An inviolable justice rules over

every existence, and whatever inequalities we see in the world are produced not from without, but from within each human being. Solomon evidently recognized this, as also the fact of rebirth, when he wrote in his book of Wisdom: "I was a child of good nature and a good Soul came to me; or rather because I was good, I came into an undefiled body." When we look at the many miseries of mankind, the prosperity of the selfish, the bitter struggles of the deserving, the oppression of the weak, it is often difficult to hold fast to our faith in a moral law. But this scepticism yields to serene confidence, when we realize that this present life is only one of a great chain of lives, in which every individual is gradually going the round of endless experience for a glorious outcome; that the hedging ills of to-day are a consequence of his own acts of yesterday and a step towards the great things of tomorrow. Thus the tangled snare of earthly existence is straightened out and becomes part of a vast, beautiful cosmic scheme. Viewed as a whole the career of the *Jiva* or individual Soul is one continuous evolution onward to the Godhead; all its strivings have only this one conscious or unconscious aim,—to reach and realize Divinity.

As soon as we understand this, the idea of Reincarnation gains a new and vital significance. Surely no other hypothesis furnishes so logical an explanation of the universe; and from whatever standpoint we look at it, we find it difficult to escape from its inevitable operations. If only the mind of the religious thinker and philosopher were as free from prejudices as that of the purely scientific man, and if in religion unbiased Truth were allowed to dominate under all circumstances, then the doctrine of Reincarnation would beyond doubt become universally acceptable and no one would consider it his duty either to uphold or discredit it. As a thoughtful Christian writer maintains: "The ethical leverage of the doctrine is immense.

Its motive power is great; it reveals as magnificent a background to the present life, with its contradictions and its disasters, as the prospect of immortality opens up an illimitable foreground, lengthening out the horizon of hope. It binds together the past and the present and the future in one ethical series of causes and effects, the inner thread of which is both personal to the individual and impersonal, connecting him with two eternities, one behind and the other before. With peculiar emphasis it proclaims the survival of moral individuality and personal identity, along with the final adjustment of external conditions to the internal state of the agent."

BIRTH AND DEATH.

Adapted from the Mahabharata.

There was a certain wise Brahmana who had attained that direct knowledge of all things which Yoga gives. He had mastered the truth regarding pleasure and pain, merit and demerit, birth and death; and understanding this, he was as unattached to all things as the wind. Possessed of perfect tranquillity of heart and with his senses under complete control, he lived like one emancipated from the world. Another Brahmana, Kashyapa by name, having heard of him, desired to see him, and approaching him with dutiful reverence, asked to be instructed by him. The Sage, pleased with his humility and earnestness, one day spoke to him thus:

"By diverse acts and by the aid of merit, mortals attain diverse ends here, as also residence in Heaven. But nowhere is the highest happiness, nowhere can residence be eternal. There are repeated falls from the highest regions, which have been acquired through such bitter striving. Repeatedly have I undergone death and rebirth. I have known many mothers, and many fathers dissimilar to one another. Diverse kinds of

happiness have been mine and diverse kinds of misery. In this world and in the other I have known sore afflictions. But one day, overwhelmed with sorrow, blank despair came upon me. I took refuge in the Formless. I gave up the world with all its joys and sorrows. Perceiving that this was the proper path, I devoted myself to it. Then I attained serenity of heart and gained the knowledge which thou seekest. Now tell me what I can do for thee, for I am much gratified with thy sincere desire for wisdom."

Kashyapa, touching the feet of the Sage, asked: "How does the body dissolve away and how is another acquired? How does one gain emancipation after the long round of rebirths? How does a human being reap the fruits of his good and bad actions?"

Thus urged by Kashyapa, the Sage answered the questions one after another. He said: "Know that the pains of birth and death are equal. The pain felt in casting off the body is like to what is felt in issuing from the womb. When the vital parts are pierced, through acts hostile to life and health, the *Jiva* or individual Soul rising up restrains the life-breath. The man then breathing a long and painful breath, goes out quickly, causing the body to tremble. But as the *Jiva* goes forth, he is surrounded by his good and evil acts, which go with him. Men possessed of the eye of knowledge, behold with spiritual vision the *Jiva* as it leaves the body and as it is reborn. They also perceive whether he is possessed of merit or demerit. It is seen by such illumined Sages that the *Jiva* has three regions assigned to it. This world, where creatures dwell, is called the field of action. In accordance with their good or evil deeds, all embodied creatures earn even here superior and inferior enjoyments. Doers of evil deeds drop to the lower regions, from which escape is difficult, and one should strive hard to save oneself from that misery. The doers of

good deeds ascend from this world to the regions of righteousness. Upon the exhaustion again of their merits, they fall away from those regions. Also there in Heaven itself is distinction of inferior, superior and middling felicity."

The Brahmana continued: "Now let me reveal to you what determines the new birth of the *Jiva*. The acts, good or bad, which he does are not subject to destruction. Upon the attainment of body after body, these acts produce fruits corresponding with them. As a fruit-bearing tree, when the season of productivity comes, yields a large quantity of fruit, so merit achieved with a pure heart yields a large harvest of felicity. In the same manner wicked deeds, done with a sinful heart, produce an abundant harvest of misery. Whatever acts, good or bad, which the *Jiva* has done in a former body, have certainly to be enjoyed or suffered by him. By such enjoyment and endurance former acts are exhausted and other acts again accumulate, till the *Jiva* succeeds in acquiring a knowledge of those spiritual practices which lead to Emancipation.

"A living creature always meets with the acts done by him in a former life. All these acts constitute the cause, in consequence of which he comes into this world in a state different from his true form. But that one who becomes united with the Source of all and who ceases to identify himself with material things, that one, casting off one bondage after another, gradually frees himself from all fetters."

There is no chance, and no anarchy, in the universe. All is system and gradation. Every god is there, sitting in his sphere. The young mortal enters the hall of the firmament; there, he is alone with them alone; they pouring on him benedictions and gifts, and beckoning him up to their thrones. On the instant, and incessantly, fall snow-storms of illusions. He fancies himself in a vast crowd which sways this way and that,

and whose movements and doings he must obey; he fancies himself poor, orphaned, insignificant. The mad crowd drives hither and thither, now furiously commanding this thing to be done, now that. What is he that he should resist their will, and think or act for himself? Every moment new changes and new showers of deceptions to baffle and distract him. And when by and by, for an instant, the air clears, and the cloud lifts a little, there are the gods still sitting around him on their thrones; they alone, with him alone. —*Emerson.*

EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

Of the Vedanta Centre of Boston.

Owing to the absence of Swami Paramananda in January, the Eighth Anniversary of the establishment of The Vedanta Centre of Boston did not take place until the 29th of March.

The exercises consisted in an address by Swami Paramananda; several delightfully rendered harp solos by Miss Hart, a member of the Centre and a professional musician of marked talent; and a learned and impressive address by Mr. John Spencer Clark, which we hope to give at length in the May number of "The Message of the East." With an authority bred of long years of tireless scientific study and deep thought, Mr. Clark laid stress on the value of the Eastern teaching for the Western world, especially in its present state of religious perplexity; and gratefully acknowledged the personal benefit derived from it through his contact with the Centre. A review of the year's work was also given, which in brief ran as follows:

A teaching, like the Vedanta, which upholds no one form of religion, but which proclaims that under all forms lies the same universal Truth, can never tabulate its usefulness in columns of statistics. It works more as an influence than

as an institution, and the results of its labors cover an unseen area that cannot be calculated. In looking back therefore over the Centre's achievement for the past year, we must add to all figures that unmeasured and immeasurable margin. During the twelve months a number of opportunities were given to extend the work and carry the teaching into new fields. A large Congregational Church in East Boston, known as the Maverick Church, invited Swami Paramananda to speak at one of their regular Sunday Evening Services on "The Universal Ideal of Religion." Fully 600 people gathered to hear him and listened with earnest appreciation and surprise to the lofty ideals of India, which had always been represented to them as one of the benighted countries of the world. Later in February the Swami delivered a lecture at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, under the auspices of the College Women's Club.

In June he made a second journey to Los Angeles, in response to urgent and reiterated invitations from those who had followed his lectures and classes there during the previous summer. A course of public lectures, two series of Class Talks and various addresses at outside meetings filled the first ten weeks of his stay and led to the establishment of a regular Vedanta Centre. An excellent house for the purpose was procured in a desirable locality and the definitely constituted work began with a new course of public lectures and weekly classes. Besides these, the Swami also gave a special series of lectures at the residence of Mrs. Marion Craig Wentworth at Santa Barbara. In October the Swami came to Boston for seven weeks and during that interval the meetings in Los Angeles were conducted by one of his assistants. He returned in December for a further season of three months.

Earlier in the year the Branch Centre in Washington arranged for their usual season of classes and lectures under the direction of Sister Devamata. It proved even more successful

than in previous years and bore gratifying testimony to the rapid growth of interest in the teaching. A number of people in Baltimore were also anxious to organize a month of similar work, but the Sister, being forced to return to Boston, was able to give one lecture only. At the Branch Centre in Geneva, Switzerland, a group of earnest students also continued their weekly meetings, striving thereby to keep alive the fire of enthusiasm kindled by the Swami during his visits there prior to the outbreak of the war.

At the Boston Centre the work was carried on throughout the year without interruption, the two Sunday Services and bi-weekly classes being conducted by Sister Devamata whenever the Swami was absent. The attendance maintained itself with encouraging steadiness and a number of new people affiliated themselves with the work. Besides the usual meetings, there were various special Services and gatherings. The Seventh Anniversary of the Centre's establishment was celebrated on January 5th; Swami Vivekananda's birthday was observed later in the same month, and the Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna on March 7th. In May the Swami entertained sixty friends and students at a dinner prepared entirely by himself, and in the late autumn he again gave a reception. The Christmastide also was marked by special devotional Services and on Christmas afternoon there was an informal reception and a tree in the Community House.

The department of publication is always one of the most potent factors in widening the field of the Centre's helpfulness. The spoken voice cannot reach beyond the lecture hall or chapel, but the printed page can travel round the world carrying to searching hearts everywhere a new message of hope and unity. This is evident from the records, which show that in 1916 over 1500 books and pamphlets went to India alone, a further number to Australia, to New Zealand, to Switzerland,

and to every part of the United States and Canada. The total number of books and pamphlets sent out from the Centre on order, not including the monthly publication for the year, amounted to over 3500. The number would have been much larger, had not the general conditions been so unfavorable that we are still holding large orders which we consider it unsafe to ship. For the same reason also the production of new works was kept at a minimum. Yet several new titles were added to the Centre's catalogue, and a number of previously published works went through new editions. "The Message of the East" continued to appear regularly, having increased its edition and lengthened its subscription list.

Looking back over the activities of the past year, we find many proofs that the work has gained in strength as well as in recognition; and if the promises of the new year fulfill themselves, there can be no doubt that still larger opportunities stretch out before the Centre.

The exercises closed with a prayer and benediction by the Swami. A pleasant hour of friendly intercourse followed, during which refreshments were served. The spirit of the gathering was one of unusual harmony and many declared it to be the most successful celebration ever given at the Centre.

Swami Paramananda reached Boston on March 17th and conducted the Sunday Services on the 18th. Hereafter he will hold all the Services and Classes.

Sister Devamata will leave for Washington on April 8th. She will remain there for one week only, delivering three public lectures and holding two classes. She will then continue her journey to Los Angeles, where she will assume charge of the work through the spring and early summer months.

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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HARMONY OF RELIGIONS.

By Swami Paramananda.

Unity in diversity is the plan of creation and harmony in religion consists in finding this unity which underlies all the apparent diversity. Oneness can never be reached by trying to destroy differences and to bring all to one form of faith, although this is the method which has often been taken by certain great religions. Being convinced that theirs is the saving faith, they set out with earnest zeal to convert those who do not believe with them. But this has always resulted in emphasizing the differences rather than in unifying the peoples of the earth. The Indo-Aryans, however, have had from the beginning a different conception of unity and harmony. Their point of view is expressed in an ancient text which runs: "As the different streams, rising from different sources, all flow, crooked or straight, into the one great sea; similarly the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they may appear, all lead to Thee, O Lord." It is this spirit of fundamental sympathy which has made the Indo-Aryan so tolerant towards all forms of religious belief. Would to God that we were all so constituted that we could accept one Ideal! But that is not possible. Although we are all human beings, each one is different from every other; and it is not in accord with nature to expect everyone

to follow our special way of thinking. Such fanatical, exclusive ideas have caused much harm to mankind. They have really checked the growth of civilization, for religion is a great power. It is the most powerful factor in moulding human destiny. Therefore misconception of a religious Ideal can be very dangerous. A person who is tolerant and loving to those of his own faith, if he lacks in understanding and breadth, may become a cruel fanatic when he meets some one with an apparently different idea.

To avoid this we must cultivate a broad view-point; our conception of God must be inclusive, not exclusive. And this is what we find in the ancient Vedic philosophy. "Truth is One; men call It by various names according to their comprehension," is its basic teaching. Just as the same substance water is called by different names in different languages, yet thereby the nature of water is not changed; similarly the Supreme is called by different names in different religions, but they all refer to the same Cosmic Being. If we only grasped this vital truth, there would be great harmony in the world; but this cannot be done merely through theory. We must understand what religion means. Religion means union between the individual Soul and God, and only as we attain unity with God can we hope to realize brotherhood with our fellow beings.

Take the definition of God given in every religion. You will find that they all proclaim that God is Almighty, All-Pervading, Omniscient, All-Merciful. Fundamentally they all agree, yet there is quarrelling and miscomprehension. Wherefrom does it arise? Not from the fundamental principle, but from the form. The masses only see the form, and forms always vary. All great religious Teachers give out the same Truth, but they differ in their form of expression; and those who are narrow-minded and limited in their conception cling

to the outer letter and base their faith on that. This is not the case, however, with people who apply religion and make it a living reality. It is because we fail to live up to our ideals that we see so much diversity. It rests with each individual to bring out the ideal of harmony or by his own limitation to create disharmony.

In the Indian teaching unity is the one dominant note. "Whatever paths men may follow, ultimately they all lead to Me," the Lord declares in one of the Scriptures. This is a very broad saying; but the true spirit of religion must be broad, it must be all-embracing. According to the Vedic conception, God is One Stupendous Whole, One without a second, the Unchanging Reality, the Ultimate Centre towards which all creeds converge. Just as we can reach the top of a tower by different means, by a ladder or a rope or a stairway, so there may be many different forms of religion prescribing different methods, yet all lead to the same Goal. On this broad platform of Truth numberless sects have found room in India. Not only, however, must there be different forms of religious belief to suit the needs of different people, but also with ourselves we find that at different stages of our development we need different religious teaching. Just as the books and toys which appeal to a child mean little to a grown-up man or woman; so as we grow, we gradually change our point of view; but this is no reason for condemning the beliefs we have left behind and which helped us to reach our present stage of development. On the contrary, as we rise higher and higher in our spiritual understanding, we see that from the lowest form of ritualism and symbolism to the most abstract conception of Absolute Truth everything has its place. This is what is meant by seeing unity in diversity. It means expanding, becoming more and more inclusive.

But if there is only one God, why can we not have one

religion? If God were like a finite human being, we might perhaps confine Him within the limits of some one book or doctrine or dogma; but He is Infinite, and the Infinite can never be limited by any finite name or form. It is because of this that the Sages have described Him as "beyond mind and speech." He cannot be expressed by any one form of religion; He includes all forms, all creeds; and all differences melt away in that One Stupendous Whole. Until we can be tolerant, we shall never understand what God is or what religion means. Nor can we have true brotherly love in our hearts. Only when we have found the One in the midst of the many, and have become united with That, can we feel unity with our fellow-beings. This is the task that lies before us:—to realize that Fundamental Principle of all life and work our way on to complete harmony; for disharmony means weakness, while harmony means strength. We see this in our daily experience. Whenever there is disharmony in our body, we fall ill and suffer; also in human society, which is only a larger body, whenever there is lack of harmony, conflict and unhappiness inevitably follow and growth is checked. It is not that we deliberately try to create discord; but despite all our reasoning we fail in maintaining harmony because our vision is confined to one small part and we do not see the Great Whole.

Sri Ramakrishna illustrates this by a story of some friends who, while resting under a tree in a garden, had seen a chameleon. One declared that it was red; another insisted that it was yellow; a third said it was, not red or yellow, but blue. Thus they began to dispute among themselves. Finally they decided to go to the gardener and refer the matter to him. The man agreed with each one, and they were all much disturbed until he explained that the chameleon was a creature of many colors, sometimes red, sometimes blue, sometimes

yellow and sometimes grey. Similarly the Supreme Deity may appear in numberless aspects; religious discussions arise because we lose sight of His Infinite Nature and try to impose on others our own small finite conception, believing that to be the only correct one. Thus it is that in the name of Christ, who taught love, forgiveness, non-resistance, people have deluged Mother Earth with blood. The fanatics of other religious faiths have also tried to convert by the same method. But what is conversion? If you want to convert anyone to a religion, you must reach his soul, not use physical violence; and you cannot reach his soul until your own soul is enlightened.

Before you can preach or uphold an Ideal, you must make it a part of your being. If you have the Light, then alone can you give light to others; and that is the only true conversion. If people could carry this light of realization everywhere, the world would be transformed; and harmony, tolerance, love would prevail. That other form of conversion, however, which proceeds by denunciation and tries to force people to accept some special creed, can only emphasize differences and create fresh barriers in the way of universal tolerance. Conversion of the soul is a very different thing from converting to a form of faith. The true missionary is one who goes, not to proselytize, but to lend a helping hand; to show the reality of religion by living the life. He tries to lead others along the path that is natural to them; to show them how they may serve more truly their own chosen Ideal. He is careful not to rob them of their religious inheritance or to limit them by condemnation.

There is a Cosmic harmony, but it can never be reached in the external, it is to be found within; and only when our inner nature is unfolded shall we discover it. We must widen our vision. A mind which is limited sees only limitation

everywhere. But an open mind penetrates far down beneath the surface and perceives the common basis of all existence. The idea of religion is not to uphold one thing at the cost of another. It means living the life, learning to feel the reality of God. All forms of religion have their use. They have all sprung up to meet some individual need. Nothing exists without a purpose, and when we understand this we become tolerant. Would to God that more among us would live and not merely theorize! Religion is a matter of realization; it is a matter of actual perception. Let all men gain this reality each by his own method. God is the primary factor, and when He is reached, it matters not by what path, all minor differences will vanish. On this basis alone can we realize true religious harmony.

OPEN YOUR EYES AND SEE HIM.

Song by Kabir.

(Translation by Rabindranath Tagore.)

Open your eyes of love, and see Him who pervades this world!
Consider it well, and know that this is your own country.
When you meet the true Guru, He will awaken your heart;
He will tell you the secret of love and detachment, and then you will know indeed that He transcends this universe.
This world is the City of Truth, its maze of paths enchants the heart;
We can reach the goal without crossing the road, such is the sport unending.
Where the ring of manifold joys ever dances about Him, there is the sport of Eternal Bliss.
When we know this, then all our receiving and renouncing is over;
Thenceforth the heat of having shall never scorch us more.

He is the Ultimate Rest unbounded:
He has spread His form of love throughout all the world.
From that Ray which is Truth, streams of new forms are perpetually springing; and He pervades those forms.
All the gardens and groves and bowers are abounding with blossom; and the air breaks forth into ripples of joy.
There the swan plays a wonderful game,
There the Unstruck Music eddies around the Infinite One;
There in the midst the Throne of the Unheld is shining, whereon the Great Being sits—
Millions of suns are shamed by the radiance of a single hair of His body.
On the harp of the road what true melodies are being sounded! and its notes pierce the heart:
There the Eternal Fountain is playing its endless life-streams of birth and death.
They call Him Emptiness who is the Truth of Truths, in Whom all truths are stored!

There within Him creation goes forward, which is beyond all philosophy; for philosophy cannot attain to Him:
There is an endless world, O my Brother! and there is the Nameless Being, of whom naught can be said.
Only he knows it who has reached that region; it is other than all that is heard and said.
No form, no body, no length, no breadth is seen there: how can I tell you that which it is?
He comes to the Path of the Infinite on whom the grace of the Lord descends: he is freed from births and deaths who attains to Him.
Kabir says: "It cannot be told by the words of the mouth, it cannot be written on paper:
"It is like a dumb person who tastes a sweet thing—how shall it be explained?"

THE RELIGIOUS INSTINCT.

By P. S. Row.

Man is a creature of God and has in him a religious instinct which cannot be shaken off or restrained at will. It is implanted in the human heart and will remain there forever. As Herbert Spencer declares: "Religion is a great reality and a great truth—nothing less than an essential and an indestructible element of human nature." It is a grave error, however, to suppose that in investigating the question of religion we should look to theology alone as the science dealing with it. Religion has to do with human duty; and a knowledge of human duty implies a knowledge of human nature; for to understand what man should do, it is necessary to know what man is. Man is a microcosm in the macrocosm, that is, a small world in a large one. His nature and constitution, if properly analyzed, must then afford the best means of disclosing what his duty is and what his religion is. Man must be studied, therefore, and the universe as well, because the relations of man and the universe he moves in are so beautifully adapted to each other as to form a harmonious whole.

I know that there are certain religious men who are jealous of the investigations of science concerning man and the material world, as though the bulwarks of religion would be undermined by the progress of scientific enquiry. But there is no ground for such fear. Scientific truth rightly understood is religious truth. Indeed, true science and Divine truth are convertible terms. There are undoubtedly people who do not scruple to use the discoveries of science as weapons with which to attack religion. This mistaken effort on their part arises from the notion that the tendency of science is to do away with the mysteries of creation, and to make the whole intelligible without the necessity of a God and all the binding obligations which the recognition of a God would entail upon

them. But this conception of science is far from correct. Speaking of the ultimate ideas of science, Herbert Spencer says in his *First Principles*: "The explication of that which is explicable does not bring out into greater clearness the inexplicableness of that which remains behind. Objective and subjective things, the man of science ascertains to be alike inscrutable in their substance and genesis. In all directions his investigations eventually bring him face to face with an insoluble enigma. He realizes with a special vividness the utter incomprehensibleness of the simplest fact considered in itself." Professor Tyndall also observes that "the problem of the connection of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in prescientific ages." And he adds further: "I do not think that he (the materialist) is entitled to say that his molecular groupings and motions explain everything. In reality they explain nothing." Haeckel also admits in his *History of Creation* that most naturalists even at the present day are inclined to give up the attempt at a natural explanation of the origin of life, and take refuge in the miracle of inconceivable creation. It will thus be seen that modern scientists have not been able to solve fully the problem of man or the universe. Indeed, it is clear that there is a definite point beyond which they have not advanced and probably cannot advance. They say that matter and energy are sufficient to account for the universe; but "if you ask him (the materialist)" to cite Professor Tyndall again, "whence is the matter of which we have been discoursing, who or what divided it into molecules, who or what impressed upon them the necessity of running into organic forms, he has no answer. Science is mute in regard to these questions."

Further, I am not aware of any modern scientist whose scientific researches have enabled him to affirm with certainty that there is no God. On the contrary, even Darwin did not

deny God as the basis of organic evolution; and John Stuart Mill acknowledges that there is nothing in science to disprove the creation and government of the universe by a Sovereign Will. There would seem, therefore, not the slightest warrant for the assertion that any discovery in science can prove derogatory to religion. Religious doubt is no sin in itself; it often forces itself upon the sincerest of men and stimulates them to conscientious inquiry regarding Truth. But what is to be deprecated is that sceptical spirit which not only doubts, but loves to go on doubting, under the erroneous idea that it bespeaks a highly advanced and cultured mind. Fortunately this has not been the spirit of all genuine scientific investigators, who, unmindful of such flippant scepticism, have been tirelessly persevering in their attempts to arrive at Truth, whatever it might be. It is certain that science has discovered nothing that can be used as a fatal weapon against religion; and if we may judge of the future from the past, we may feel sure that no future scientific discovery can ever do it harm. Like pure gold, which does not suffer but gains additional lustre by being made to pass through the furnace, even so true religion gains additional lustre by passing through the purging fire of science.

Religion is ethical as well as metaphysical. It is in the branch of the metaphysical that all discussion and disagreement occur; but the ethical portion still remains, and in its essential parts is common to all mankind. God is One, therefore all religion and morality must be one in essence. "Morality knows nothing of geographical boundaries or distinctions of race," we read in Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics*. "You may put men on opposite sides of a river or a chain of mountains; may also part them by a tract of salt water; may give them, if you like, distinct languages; and may even color their skins differently; but you cannot change their fundamental

relationships. Originating as these do in the fact of man's constitution, they are unaltered by the accidents of external condition. The moral law is cosmopolite, is no respecter of nationalities, and between men who are the antipodes of each other, either in locality or anything else, there must still exist the same balance of rights as though they were next-door neighbors in all things."

It is sometimes said that the belief in God is not universal and that travellers have found peoples who have no religion whatever. But we should recollect that the idea of religion differs among men, and what such travellers mean is probably that the religious tenets of the people they have met with are not like their own; for we cannot imagine any race of human beings, not even savages, who are devoid of the notion of the existence of some Superior Being or Power, and of a feeling of reverence for and the necessity of offering worship to such a power. Professor Max Müller bears me out in this when he says in his *Hibbert Lectures*: "We may safely say that in spite of all researches no human beings have been found anywhere who do not possess something which to them is Religion; or, to put it in the most general form, a belief in something beyond what they can see with their eyes. As I cannot go into the whole evidence for this statement, I may be allowed to quote the conclusion which another student of the science of religion, Professor Tieler, has arrived at on this subject, particularly as, on many points, his views differ widely from my own. 'The statement,' he says, 'that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion rests either on inaccurate observations or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of belief in any higher beings; and travellers who asserted their existence have been afterwards refuted by facts. It is legitimate, therefore, to call religion, in its most generous sense, an universal phenomenon of humanity.'"

Granting, however, that we find no traces of religion among certain tribes, this does not prove that man in general has no religious instinct; for his sense of the Deity may possibly be obscured or obliterated by a variety of circumstances, like any other sense. We know that in studying the true characteristics of a vegetable we do not choose a deteriorated plant; why then, in studying the nature of man, should we take a deteriorated example? If the plant cease to bear seed under some abnormal circumstances, we do not infer from this that it is not the nature of the plant to bear seed; nor should we conclude, because we may find a primitive people apparently without a religion, that the religious instinct is not an innate and fundamental property of every human being.

A man's religion is the relation which he believes himself to bear to the endless universe around him, and to the source of that endless universe; and as every man believes himself to bear some relation to the universe, every man must have a religion. —*Tolstoi.*

Depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds alone to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate, and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity: nay, even that school which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion. —*Bacon.*

Where is the Lord and how is He to be found? There are pearls in the deep sea, but one must hazard all perils to get them. So is the Lord in this universe.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

TWO KINDS OF KNOWLEDGE.

From the Mundaka-Upanishad.

Saunaka, a great householder, approached Angiras respectfully and asked: Revered Sir, what is that by knowing which all else becomes known?

He said to him: Two kinds of knowledge must be known, this is what all who know Brahman (the Supreme) tell us,—the higher and the lower knowledge.

The lower knowledge is the Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda, Atharva-Veda, *Siksha* (phonetics), *Kalpa* (ceremonial), *Vyakarna* (grammar), *Nirukta* (etymology), *Chandas* (metre), *Jyotisha* (astronomy); but the higher knowledge is that by which the Indestructible is apprehended.

That which cannot be seen, nor seized; which has no family and no caste, no eyes or ears, no hands or feet; the Eternal, the All-Pervading, infinitely Subtle, that which is Imperishable, That it is which the wise regard as the Source of all beings.

As the spider sends forth and draws in its thread, as plants grow on the earth, thus does everything arise here from the Indestructible.

This is the Truth. As from a blazing fire sparks, being like unto fire, fly forth a thousandfold, thus are various beings brought forth from the Imperishable, O friend, and again return thither.

That Divine Being is without body, He is both without and within, not produced; without breath and without mind, pure, higher than the High Imperishable.

From Him is born breath, mind, and all organs of sense; ether, air, light, water and the earth; He is the Support of all.

From Him come the seas and all the mountains, from Him flow all rivers; from Him come all herbs and the Life-Force through which the Soul is sustained.

That Being is all; He is *Karma* (sacrifice), *Tapas* (the fire of devotion); He is the Supreme, the Highest Immortal. He who knows This One as abiding in the core of the heart, he, O friend, cuts asunder the knot of ignorance even here on this earth.

THEORY AND PRACTICE.

By Sister Devamata.

In all activity we find two factors—will and deed, faith and works, theory and practice; and we recognize that a life is useful and happy only in proportion as the will takes shape in deed, or as the theory is made a fact in practice. The life of abortive intentions is always a life of misery. A man can never be happy so long as he makes pretensions which his daily living does not substantiate. And nowhere is this so true as in religion. Yet strangely enough in religion more than anywhere theory is an accepted substitute for practice. We would not consider a man travelled who sat at home and informed himself of foreign countries through books; nor would we expect anyone to become a good artist merely by reading about painting, but that person quite commonly passes for religious who listens to sermons or reads in the Scriptures about God without seeking to know Him, and who admits the possibility of realization but makes no effort to gain it.

Religion is not an end in itself. It is a method—a method, as the word signifies, by which man may rebind himself to God; and like all methods it has no value unless applied. As a method, however, it need not be fixed or exclusive; for in all departments of knowledge the greatest elasticity in method is observable. How many methods there are in music! How many schools in painting! How many systems in science! In every case the end is the same and the elements to be dealt

with are similar, but the manner in which the means are handled to gain the end is capable of indefinite variation. Each individual, indeed, introduces his own modification. Likewise in the spiritual life, as each man works out his own salvation he evolves his own religion. He may seem to follow in the general plan of action the broad lines of some accepted creed; but if we could place his thought under a psychological microscope, we should see how he interprets and bends the familiar injunctions according to his peculiar mental constitution. It is this individual variation which makes his faith living. Forbid or strangle it and his spiritual nature hardens and withers. We see it wherever bigotry seeks to cast all spiritual aspiration and observance in some sternly defined mould. Freedom is the primary condition of growth for how can we expand unless there is room for expansion? As soon as all latitude for self-expression is denied, practice degenerates into routine and the letter smothers the spirit.

Freedom of thought and action, however, must not be confounded with dissipation of energy. It does not consist in going hither and thither, hearing different forms of teaching but declaring allegiance to none. The law of spiritual growth allows us choice in method, but exacts faithful adherence to the method chosen. Each human being, Vedanta declares, must determine his own path but having once entered upon it, he must not deviate from it. It is no more rational to mix methods in religion than in music or art. A student in any line, who is continually shifting from one school to another, never becomes proficient. He develops proficiency only as he selects the form of teaching best adapted to his requirements and follows it with steadfast regularity, until he has so far mastered the technique of his calling that he need not think of method at all, but can give free play to the spirit within. Nor should we fear that we may become narrow by adopting this

course in our religious life. So long as we remember that our faith is only a means to an end, we are safe. Devotion to a form unquestionably contracts, but one-pointed devotion to an Ideal expands. When God is truly the goal, any road by which we seek Him must inevitably broaden and broaden until it loses itself in infinity. Restless curiosity is not catholicity, nor is multiplicity of interests a sign of universality. One does not become universal by running back and forth on the circumference, but by moving steadily down some one radius to the Centre where all radii meet.

In both secular and spiritual development Vedanta recognises three stages—hearing, reflection, and realization. The first is the stage of theory, the second of practice and the third of knowledge. The theoretical mind always sees and emphasizes differences; it cannot relate, hence it is perpetually replacing one theory by another. Practice, on the contrary, by purifying and sharpening our powers of penetration, enables us to discern unsuspected points of contact; and as we learn to co-ordinate and unify, we grow in understanding; for all knowledge rests on generalization, or as the Vedic Sages put it: "Seeing sameness is knowledge; seeing difference is ignorance." Theory and practice must follow each other in rhythmic succession. As in Geometry the proposition is first stated and then demonstrated, after which comes another theorem with its demonstration, one leading logically out of the other; so, in living, each new vision calls for a fresh effort and readjustment, which will again lead to a further vision. If we do not make full use of the light which has already come to us, our life will remain in a static condition; we shall receive no new material to work upon. Until we are faithful in lesser things, we cannot expect to be made ruler over greater. Too often people wait for some impelling revelation before devoting themselves to the spiritual life; but only as

they utilize their present opportunity will they create a new and larger one. The first task for us is to put into practice what we now recognize as true, to make our lives obedient to the higher laws we already know.

Take, for example, the ordinary problem of anger. We are all struggling to control our temper, but how many are making a fundamental effort to conquer anger itself? We wait until we feel ourselves growing angry, then we try to suppress it by a sudden act of will, as one would push down the cover on a kettle which is boiling over. But the method does not prove effective; the waves of temper still rise. What we should do is to focus our energy on the inside at the point where anger begins, not on the outside where it ends. We should go deep down within, find that thing which reacts in anger, and deal with that. The only way to permanently eliminate the tendency to anger is by altering our sense of values, by increasing our measure of things through discrimination so that that which made us angry will appear too trifling to disturb us. When Arjuna complains to Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita that he sees no chance of acquiring serenity and self-control because of the extreme restlessness of the mind, Sri Krishna replies: "Undoubtedly the mind is restless and difficult to curb, but through practice and dispassion it can be conquered." It is this element of dispassion in our practice which makes it fruitful. There is a natural upward tendency in every living thing which asserts itself the moment the clinging to the lower level is removed. Thus every growth implies an act of detachment. The child outgrows its toys and drops them; the treasures that tempt the youth fall unheeded from the hands of the riper man. We practise indeed in order that we may outgrow, just as one repeats day after day an exercise in music, only to put it aside the moment it is learned and take up another.

In the practice of religion nothing must be considered a finality short of God. Again and again the Bhagavad-Gita tells us that only those who regard Him as their Supreme Goal will reach Him. Powers, learning, relative knowledge or acquirement of any kind, even the highest, must not turn us aside from this ultimate end. Unless indeed we are striving at every moment to rebind ourselves to the Whole, we have no right to call ourselves religious. It matters not what method we use. If a man is shipwrecked, he cares little with what they lash him to the floating spar: a strip of sail-cloth, a rope or cable are all one to him if only he can save his life. So when there surges up in our hearts the yearning to become one with the Source of wisdom, life and joy, each duty and condition will be utilized to gain our end. The longing for God-union will spontaneously convert every act into an act of worship and make every word we speak a prayer.

The greatest enemy we have to meet along the way is doubt. Doubt is at the root of all weakness. Our jealousy, our discontent, our indecision, all our evil passions, spring from doubt. That is why the Gita declares that "one of doubting mind perishes." And doubt is the close companion of theory. One thing alone can arm us against this enemy, and that is practice. When we have actually experienced anything, our faith remains firm in the face of the bitterest onslaughts. If we have seen Paris or London, no amount of argument can convince us that we have not seen it; in the same way, when we have actually perceived even the smallest ray of Truth, so far as our experience reaches we cannot be shaken. All the noisy arguments about God and religion which have jarred upon the ears of men down the centuries would have died into silence had St. Paul's counsel been heeded to prove all things and hold fast to that which is true. It is the man of theory who is hot in dispute. The man of

practice is quiet and slow to speak. He does not angrily defend what he does not know. He listens, ponders and verifies before he makes any statement. The story is told in India that in ancient days a vast religious congress was held in the Himalayas, and a heated discussion arose in the course of it as to which was the greatest of the Hindu Trinity,—Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, or Shiva the Transformer. When the debate was loudest, a highly-honored Sage entered and was asked to decide the question. "I have not seen Brahma or Vishnu or Shiva; how can I tell which is greatest?" was his answer, and stillness fell on the assembly.

It would be a shock to many pious theists to tell them that they are unbelievers; yet their lives prove them so. They affirm confidently that God exists, but they exert themselves less to seek acquaintance with Him than with some passing celebrity of the hour. If they were assured that their mother was in the same city with them, would they make as little effort to go to her? This shows that God's existence has no reality for them. What is God? According to every Scripture, He is all beauty, all power, all joy, all life. If a man really thought that there was someone who could bestow on him these coveted gifts in inexhaustible measure he would strive without ceasing till he had established some relation with him. Let a thief know that there is a bag of gold in the adjoining room and he will gain entrance there at any price; so when we really awaken to the fact that God exists and that He is all that we say He is, we shall not rest day or night until we find Him. It will not matter whether He is intra-cosmic or extra-cosmic, whether He is personal or impersonal, whether He is the God of the Jews or of the Gentiles; all these intricate questions of theology will be as nothing to us; our one cry will be to reach God and unite ourselves eternally with Him. It is told of Swami Vivekananda that

in his youth he went from one holy man to another, asking: "Have you seen God?" When the reply came in the negative, he would remark: "Why are you preaching or singing the praises of someone you have never seen?" At last his cousin said to him: "There is a great soul at the Temple of Dakshineswar who will cure you of your scepticism. Come, I will take you to him." They went. As he sat near Sri Ramakrishna, he asked: "Do you believe in God?" "Yes." "Have you seen Him?" "Yes." "Can you make me see Him?" "Yes." That was enough. From that minute he followed Sri Ramakrishna. Nothing ever turned him aside. Here was one who had seen God, to whom God was an actual reality, and who had the power to make Him real to others.

But how can anyone see God? you may ask. Do you suppose that God, who has made Himself visible in all these myriad forms of His universe, in all this play of glory and loveliness, cannot also make Himself perceptible to each of us in just the form in which we can best comprehend Him? Since he is omnipotent, He has the power to clothe Himself in any dress, to show Himself in any form. Only we must remember the words of Sri Krishna to Arjuna; we cannot see Him with these human eyes; by earnest practice we must develop a subtler spiritual vision. When any man longs for God enough to struggle night and day to reach Him; to make every activity of his life, every thought of his mind, every feeling of his heart carry him Godward, until his whole being is one quivering call for the Divine, God cannot refuse to manifest Himself. He will come whether the man is lettered or unlettered, whether he is a church member or a solitary worshipper, whether he is a Jew or Mohammedan, Hindu or Christian. God will reveal Himself in just the aspect which the devotee can most easily grasp, and at once there will flash in that man's heart such an effulgent light of knowledge that

he will be able to perceive the Divine in all things.

The time has come for us to put aside theoretical interest in religious matters and to consecrate ourselves to a sincere spiritual practice. Recently much has been said about what can be done to fill the churches. Let ministers and people but begin to lead genuine Christ lives, and the churches will be crowded to the doors. It is not by any expedient or policy that the religious consciousness can be quickened; it is by the practice of the faith. No belief in a creed, no mere intellectual study of the Scriptures can make a man a true man. Only devotion to a high Ideal will do it. Take the saintly characters of any religion and follow their example. Be cheerful when you are tempted to give way to depression. Be contented when all your life is other than you would have it. Be happy in poverty when you crave riches. Be patient when all things try you. Be calm and serene even when men ridicule or denounce you. Be pure and holy in the midst of impurity and selfishness. Be earnest and unfaltering in your daily meditation and study. Never forget your purpose; never let your longing for God waver, even though the world call you foolish, and you will surely attain. You need not repeat a creed, you need not have a fixed place of worship, you need not hold to any one name or form of Deity; you need only have your own soul and an insatiable hunger for Truth, and you will grow and flourish and bear fruit like the tree described in the Bible, in whose branches the birds came and lodged and under whose cool shade weary wayfarers found refreshment and rest. This is all you need—earnestness, longing, and determination to embody in your life as much of Truth as you know today; and out of that practice will come each new day an ever-deepening knowledge, an ever-expanding union with the Infinite and Eternal.

THE NEED OF RESOLUTION.

Parable by Gautama Buddha.

There was a zealous disciple of the Buddha who had taken a vow to spend a certain time in solitary contemplation; but he grew weary and fell away. Then he said to himself: "The Blessed One has taught that there are divers kinds of men; I must belong to the lowest class and am come to believe that in this world there can be no attainment for me. Of what use a forest life if, with all my endeavor, I cannot gain through meditation the vision which I have sought with such devotion? Thus he left his wooded solitude and returned to Jetavam.

When his brothers saw him they rebuked him, saying: "You have done wrong, O brother, to give up without fulfilling your vow," and they led him to the Master.

The Blessed One, seeing their approach, asked: "Why have you brought this brother? I see he has come against his will. What has he done?"

"Lord, this brother has broken his vow and without completing his meditation has come back to us."

Then the Master said to him: "Is it true that you have given up?"

"It is true, O Blessed One!" was his answer.

The Blessed One then said: "This present life is a time of grace. If you fail to reach the state of true happiness here, you will suffer bitter remorse in future lives. Why have you grown so wavering and irresolute? In your past existence you were full of determination. By your effort alone the men and bullocks of five hundred wagons obtained water in the desert and were saved. How is it that you so easily give up now?"

At once the brother was filled with new strength. But the other disciples besought Lord Buddha to tell them the meaning of His words; and yielding to their importunities, He related to them this story:

At the time when Brahmadatta was ruling in Benares, Bodhisattva took birth in a merchant's family; and when he grew up he went about trading with five hundred carts. One day he arrived at a vast sandy desert. The sand in this desert was so fine that even in a tightly-closed hand it would slip through the fingers. When the sun rose it was like burning charcoal, so hot that no man could walk upon it. Those who had to traverse it travelled during the night, taking with them wood and water, oil and rice. Each morning at daybreak they broke their journey, spread an awning and passed the day under its shade. At sunset they ate their evening meal, yoked their oxen, and when the sands had cooled proceeded on their way, led by a desert-pilot who guided them by the stars.

Thus the merchant crossed the desert with his caravan. Fifty-nine leagues had they gone and they thought: "One more night and we shall be over these burning sands." So when supper was over, again the oxen were yoked and they pushed forward. The pilot sat in the foremost wagon, scanning the heavens; but he was worn with watching, and he fell asleep. In the unbroken waste none saw that the oxen had circled round and were returning the way they had come.

They travelled thus unhindered the whole night through. At dawn the pilot woke and, beholding the stars, in dismay called out: "Stop! stop!" The wagons lined up; then the men cried: "These are the ashes of our fires of yesterday! It is the camp we left last night! Our wood and water are gone! We are lost!" Unyoking their oxen and spreading the canopy, they lay down under the wagons in grim despair. But Bodhisattva said within himself: "I must not lose heart, else all these will perish"; and while it was yet cool he walked about until suddenly he came upon a tuft of Kusha-grass. "Surely this could not have grown without water," he thought.

Then he called his men and made them dig sixty cubits

deep. When they had dug thus far, their spades struck on a rock and they gave up, more despondent than before. But Bodhisattva thought: "There must be water beneath that rock"; so he descended into the well and, stooping down, laid his ear against the rock. The sound of gurgling water could be heard. Climbing out, he called his page. "My lad," he said, "if we give up now we shall be lost. Do not lose heart. Take this strong hammer, go down and deal a heavy blow on the rock."

The boy obeyed. He struck the rock with all his might. It split in two, and from under it burst a stream of clear, cold water, filling the well to the height of a palm tree. The men drank and bathed, cooked rice and ate, and fed their oxen. Then they marked the well with a flag, and when the sun had set they resumed their journey. And the Blessed One concluded: "The caravan leader was Bodhisattva, the future Buddha; the page who was then so resolute and broke the stone was this brother now lacking in perseverance; the other men were the followers of the Buddha."

REPORTS.

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston there has been a marked increase of activity in every department since the return of Swami Paramananda from the West. The attendance has grown much larger and a number of strangers are coming each week to the Centre. The Swami will continue to conduct all the services and classes, which will remain the same throughout the months of May and June.

* * * *

In order to shorten the interval during the summer when *The Message of the East* will not appear, we shall bring out the succeding numbers later in the month. Subscribers are requested to notify us promptly of any change of address.

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NINTH SEASON—1917

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"	*17th*	*Self Knowledge.*
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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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SOME ASPECTS OF MAN.

By S. E. Waldo

The old, old question that has been the riddle of the ages is "What is man?" From every plane of thought has come the answer. Every religion offers its own solution of the problem. In the main, Christianity presents the idea that man is a mere worm of the dust, "conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity." Material science would make him an outcome of evolutionary processes. But Vedanta, passing beyond his apparent nature, gives us a noble ideal of what he is essentially. It tells us that he is both personal and impersonal, and that the body and mind are only a mask which hides the real man. This is indeed the original meaning of the word person; it comes from the word "persona," a mask, used by actors in ancient times to cover their own features and so help them to portray more truly the character they assumed. These bodies and minds of ours are covering from sight the real being in us and the effort of all existence is to uncover the true man behind the appearance. We have worn these "masks" so long that we have come to identify ourselves with them and have forgotten that they are not really ourselves, but only a temporary covering laid over our real nature by ignorance. Swami Vivekananda describes the soul of man as a circle, whose centre is where his body is and all his activity is manifested

there. Man is really omnipresent, but his consciousness is concentrated in this central point which he calls his body. He has taken up particles of matter and formed them into a machine through which to express himself and this machine for expression is the body. When one machine fails, the centre moves on and takes up other particles of matter, finer or coarser, and manufactures a new machine for expression. Expression or manifestation is only possible through form, though it may be form of a very fine and subtle nature. Manifestation means just this,—that by limitation something is separated from an indiscriminate whole and we recognize it by certain definite qualities as distinct from other things. Emerson says "God is a circle whose circumference is nowhere and whose centre is everywhere;" but every point in that circle is equally living, conscious and active; whereas with man only one point is conscious. As man evolves, however, his consciousness expands and his conception of God and of himself will continually enlarge and develop. For what is evolution really? It is the unfolding of nature and the manifesting of the Divine. Veil after veil lifts, revealing more and more of that inner light which is the Soul. When the last veil is gone, man has accomplished the purpose of all evolution; he has reached perfection. This is the answer which Vedanta gives to the question, "What is Man?"

Even materialism is fast arriving at the conclusion that man is more than body and mind, more than a "fortuitous concourse of atoms" moved by some physical law. Every day the earnest scientific investigator in following out his conclusions finds that he reaches a point where physics ends and metaphysics begins. The very term matter has come to include a vast deal more than it did fifty or sixty years ago. Then only what was ponderable was called matter; but since researches into electricity have been carried so much further,

the scientist has found means to detect what he is forced to call substances, which can be weighed on no scale invented or seen through no microscope however powerful. In this world of apparently infinite variety, we have every reason to believe that there is an infinitely greater portion which is entirely beyond the reach of what are called the five senses. As some animals have been proved to possess certain senses in a far more highly developed form than they are found in man, it seems only reasonable to believe that man himself may under certain conditions intensify his present senses and develop new ones. Science, indeed, regards this as a necessary process in evolutionary development. It is believed that in the course of ages, during which man has developed from protoplasm to his present estate, one sense after another was evolved as it was needed until we have the number we now enjoy. Since the working of the evolutionary law is uniform and the end has not been reached, the probability is that other perceptive faculties will be evolved in the ages to come and man will reach a state as far in advance of his present one as this is in advance of the protoplasm. Such is the aspect man presents to the evolutionist.

Turning now to religion, we find that every religion, however primitive, teaches invariably that man is now in a less happy condition than in his first estate. The widest researches among the crudest forms of religion have proved that every race has the tradition of something analagous to the "Fall of Man." The savage always asserts that in the dim past his ancestors descended from either the gods or from a very superior condition of existence, where they possessed greater powers and were happy and contented. The Eden myth, in one form or another, is older than all history. The Vedanta has a more clearly defined idea of what this myth means. It teaches that this inherent belief in man,—that he is at present

in a lower condition of spirituality and happiness than originally belonged to him, is the soul's recognition of its Divine origin. In the darkest ages that remembrance was never entirely obliterated. The One Self was never so deeply covered from sight that man could be made to lose all sense of his relation to the Divine. This is proved by the fact that he always has had some form of religion, which was the expression of his effort to relate himself with an unknown something beyond the range of his senses. That effort is the mainspring of every form of religion the world has ever known, from the crudest attempt of the primitive and savage man to the sublimest concept of the loftiest religion or philosophy. This aspect of man,—as a being ever reaching after the spiritual world and never satisfied with the mere world of phenomena—is the aspect that points to his real oneness with that Divinity which his very nature impels him to struggle incessantly to know. When man is looked at from this point of view, we cease to think of him as a "worm of the dust"; and when he can look upon himself in the light of a Divine being destined finally to reach a full realization of that Divinity, he is able to make an intelligent effort to free himself from the ignorance which prevents that realization.

Ignorance is the source of all our misery. In striving to attain to freedom, we make constant mistakes; these are regarded as "sins" and we are vigorous in our condemnation of those who commit them. All sorts of remedies for what is known as "sin" have been prescribed, yet we see that it still continues with us. One real remedy exists, however, and that is knowledge. Call it by what name we will, yet it is knowledge and knowledge only that can prevent sin. When a man learns by repeated experience that the results of certain actions are invariably unpleasant and unsatisfactory, he ceases to do these actions: he has gained some knowledge. In the same

way, when man finds through numberless other experiences that the results of certain other actions are more agreeable, he will form the habit of performing such acts: he has gained more knowledge. After ages of these alternating experiences man will finally develop a habit of doing right; and then he is ready for the next step,—to do right, not in order to bring pleasure and avoid pain, but to do it for its own sake, because it is good to do good. At last he will come to see that he is one with all mankind; and losing all sense of separateness, he will work in harmony with the universe. He will then have gained the highest knowledge and for him sin will be eliminated. First man works for mere self-gratification; then comes a sense of duty, a sense that it is better to do some things and worse to do others, and that there rests upon him an obligation to do the better things; then finally through action done for duty's sake, man expands and rises to a stage where he acts no more from duty, but from freedom and from love.

While man is striving to do his duty, the various rites and practices of religion are of service to him. If a man begins by a little meditation in the morning and at night, he will end by making his whole life a meditation. The beautiful thoughts and experiences that come to him in the hour of meditation will grow increasingly attractive, and at last his mind will dwell on them most of the time and they will color all his life. No matter then what outward work he may be engaged in, his mind will be filled with the "peace that passeth all understanding." It is not that such a man goes out of the world and abandons his fellowmen. He has learned to live in the world as the lotus leaf lives in the water, yet is never wet. He becomes what the Vedanta calls "non-attached." It does not mean that we are not to love anything at all. That is not being non-attached. It rather means that we become so

attached to all things with an equal love, as parts of one great whole, that we lose particular attachment to any special persons or things on account of their relation to ourselves. The Bhagavad-Gita calls this looking upon everything with equal affection "sameness"; and it is a very high state indeed, a state so high that to most men it is only an ideal to be striven for. Yet it is good for man to strive for the highest ideal of which he can conceive. In that way he makes his greatest progress. The man who is satisfied with mediocrity, may attain to it, but will never get beyond it. It is a great incentive to man to learn how much depends upon himself; to feel that he is not a mere automaton, the helpless victim of fate or chance, but that his destiny lies in his own hands; and that always within him is the upward movement of the soul leading him towards the good.

The Gita tells us that no good action is ever lost, that if a man strives sincerely to come to God and then fails, yet he has not lost anything of the gain made by those sincere efforts; and when he once more sets his face in the same direction, he does not have to start all over again, but can begin where he left off. It is more than the work of a lifetime to fit oneself for the highest realization. That is why the doctrine of Reincarnation, which is universally accepted among the Hindus, is necessary. This one little life that we live and that to most people seems of supreme importance, what is it but an infinitesimal *now* between an infinite past and an endless future? If we can conceive of this life as an infinite circle, beginning and ending in God, then one span of human existence is less than a pin prick on that vast circle.

According to the view man takes of himself will depend the aim he sets before himself in life. If he regards himself as a mere material being, born today to perish tomorrow, he will naturally seek to extract all the pleasure out of the de-

lights of this world. Yet even that view of life is sure eventually to lead him higher. The pursuit of pleasure for its own sake has been proved by millions to be a vain one. Yet other millions have to make the discovery for themselves. Experience is our only true teacher, but it is a sure one. There should be no blind belief, we should *know*. With the growth of knowledge man will get a true concept of what he is. He will perceive that he is essentially Divine; and thus perceiving, he will be ready and willing to enter upon the path leading to the realization of that Divinity. And he will fully understand that he can never reach the goal through selfish competition with his fellowmen; but that only through unselfish effort to help them, to co-operate with them in the endeavor to reach that goal, to realize the existence underlying all manifestation, can he hope himself to attain the desired end. In learning not only intellectually but *actually* that all being is one, man will realize his own true nature, the one Self, the Soul of all existence; and he will perceive that it includes not only humanity, but the universe.

THE LOWER AND THE HIGHER SELF.

Adapted from the Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad

A king named Brihadratha, having placed his son on the throne, went into the forest, because he had realized that this body is transient and that from the satisfaction of material desires no true happiness can be gained. At the end of a thousand days the Saint Sakayanya, who knew the Self, came near, burning with splendor like a fire without smoke. He said to the king: "Rise, rise! Choose a boon."

The king, bowing down before him, said: "O Saint, I know not the Self. Thou knowest the essence of our being. Teach it us."

Sakayanya replied: "What thou askest is difficult to attain. Choose other pleasures."

The king, touching the Saint's feet, said: "O Saint, of what use the enjoyment of pleasures in this body? All things here are perishable. Deign therefore to take me out of this world, for in this world I am like a frog in a dry well."

Then the Saint, well-pleased, said to Brihadratha: "This is the science of Brahman (the Supreme) and the science of all the Upanishads, O king, which was told us by the Saint Maitri. I shall tell it thee. Once the Valakhilyas said to Prajapati Kratu: 'O Saint, this body is without intelligence, like a cart. To what belongs the great power by which such a body has been made intelligent? Or who is the driver?'

"Prajapati answered: 'He who in the Scriptures is spoken of as "standing above" amidst the objects of the world; he indeed, the pure, the clean, the tranquil one, bodiless, endless, imperishable, firm, everlasting, unborn, the independent one, he stands in his own greatness and by him has the body been made intelligent; he is also the driver of it.'

" 'This is the Self, who seeming to be filled with desires and seeming to be overcome by bright and dark fruits of action, wanders about in every body, himself remaining free. Because he is not manifest, because he is infinitely small, because he is invisible, because he cannot be grasped, because he is attached to nothing, therefore he, though seeming to be changing and acting, is in reality unchanging and actionless. He is pure, firm, stable, undefiled, unmoved, free from desire, remaining a spectator, resting in himself."

"The Valakhilyas said to Prajapati Kratu: 'O Saint, if thou thus showest the greatness of the Self, then who is that other one, also called self, who really overcome by bright and dark fruits of action, enters on a good or bad birth? Downward or upward is his course and overcome by the pairs of opposites (heat and cold, pleasure and pain, etc.) he roams about?'

"Prajapati Kratu replied: 'That is indeed that other different one called the elemental (or lower) self, who overcome by bright and dark fruits of action enters on a good or bad birth. Downward or upward is his course and overcome by the pairs of opposites he roams about. He who acts is the elemental self, he who causes to act by means of the organs is the inner man. Now as a ball of iron, pervaded by fire and hammered by smiths, assumes manifold forms; thus the elemental self, pervaded by the inner man and hammered by the qualities of matter, becomes manifold. And as when the ball of iron is hammered, the fire is not overcome; so the inner man is not overcome, but the elemental self alone is overcome, because it has united itself with the elements.'

"The Valakhilyas, whose passions were subdued, then said: 'O Saint, we bow before thee; teach us further. By what process may the elemental self, after leaving this identity with the elemental or material body, obtain union with the True Self?'

"Prajapati Kratu said to them: 'This is indeed the remedy for the elemental self: Acquirement of knowledge and performance of one's own duty. Through the performance of one's duty one attains the Highest, otherwise one falls downward. But no one obtains knowledge of the Highest Self who does not practise self-discipline (*Tapas*). By self-discipline goodness is obtained; from goodness understanding is reached; from understanding the Self is known; and he who has known his True Self does not return to this world. By knowledge, by self-discipline and by meditation one reaches the Supreme. He who knows this and worships God through these three, obtains bliss imperishable, infinite and unchangeable. Then freed from the bondage of body, senses and all physical limitations, by which he was filled and overcome, he attains union with the Supreme Śelf.

RIGHT THINKING AND RIGHT LIVING.

By Swami Paramananda

"Earnestness is the path of immortality, thoughtlessness is the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already. If an earnest person has roused himself, if he is not forgetful, if his deeds are pure, if he acts with consideration, if he restrains himself and lives according to the Law, then his glory will increase." Such are the words of Buddha. It is thought which moulds our character. Of all factors it is the mightiest in shaping human life and destiny; and unless we pay proper attention to our thought, it is impossible to accomplish anything. A man may work, he may struggle to gain some end, but if he has not the right understanding, that is, if he has not awakened the faculty of right thinking, he is like a boatman who is pulling on his oars without having drawn up his anchor; the boat will not go forward. Similarly those who have not roused themselves from the slumber of ignorance, no matter what they may try to do, they will not succeed.

The power of right thinking must be awakened; that is the first step. You may say: "We all think." Yes, we all think; but thought is of two kinds:—one is constructive, it uplifts man to great heights; the other is destructive, it degrades and instead of helping proves a great drawback. Yet the same mind is used for both. It is said in one of the Upanishads: This mind is the cause of bondage and of liberation for all human beings. If attached to the world, it becomes bound; if free from the world, that is liberty." How is it that the same mind can play such a double part? Because the mind can either go downward or it can go upward, whichever way we choose to direct it. It is ready to serve us and lead us onward; and if we neglect it, it will bind us and draw us back to the brute plane. Therefore we cannot

afford to disregard this important factor in our life; for right thought is the fly-wheel of this great machine of human life and unless it revolves properly, this machine can do nothing. It may even be destroyed; for if we are not discriminative, we may make mistakes which will prove our ruin. In the Upanishads this body has been compared to a chariot, the senses are the horses, the mind is the reins, the intellect is the driver, and the Self who dwells within is the Lord of the chariot. Unless the horses are well controlled and the reins firmly held, unless the driver is intelligent, the chariot may be thrown into the ditch and destroyed. But if the discriminative faculty is awake, that is, if the driver follows the path of right thinking, then he has perfect control over both horses and chariot.

There are people who appear to have complete control over their mind, what gives them this power? It comes from right thinking and right living, for right thinking and right living go together. Only the man who lives in the right way; whose thoughts do not betray him; whose mind and mouth are one, as Sri Ramakrishna has said, that is, whose inner thought and outer activity are in perfect harmony: he alone will be able to accomplish great things. No one can do great things unless he first thinks great things. Those who have ambitions and try to realize them by over-riding their fellow-beings can only attain ephemeral results. Right thinking means that we do not wish to hurt anyone; we may want to progress, but not at the cost of another. There cannot be any selfish idea in it. We desire to grow only in order that our growth may prove a help to mankind. No one can really grow who thinks wholly of himself, or even of those who stand closest to him.

Unless we take all mankind into consideration, our growth cannot be far-reaching; we cannot become great. That is the reason why the first principle of all religious teachers has

been to hate no man; to conquer everything through love, because love is constructive. Even when we wish to create something great for ourselves, if we try to obtain it through hatred, we shall find that it crumbles very soon, because there is a destructive element in it. Those who seek to harm their fellowmen sooner or later inevitably meet with punishment. The law of this world makes them unhappy and they will be unhappy hereafter, for the hereafter is nothing but the resultant of what we do here. It is not enough to pray or work for our own happiness and peace; there cannot be any true happiness or peace unless it encircles others. All are related to us in spirit; and if we hate anyone, we are hating something which is a part of ourselves. This realization of universal oneness in spirit destroys what we call evil.

Why is it that we think so much of earthly possessions, of wealth and prosperity, of all these things which begin and end with this life? And we scarcely give a thought to that which is lasting, to that which concerns our soul. Yet we pose as intelligent human beings. If anyone among us tries to live a different kind of life and apply the Gospel of Truth given by the Illumined Ones, we think that that person is doing wrong. Is thinking of God and Truth wrong? Is serving a lofty Ideal wrong? That is a superstition which we must remove from our heart if we would progress. All erroneous and weakening thoughts must be rooted out if we want to advance either physically or morally or spiritually. Too often such thoughts are put into our heads in childhood,—that we must live in a certain way and not do anything different from those with whom we are associated. If all those about us were ideal characters, it might be right for us to follow in their footsteps. But our soul-hunger is for something else and we must gain that.

When we study the teaching of the Vedas, we find that it

insists upon one thing,—being and becoming. Man must become; he must become one with Truth. How? He must first wake himself from the sleep of ignorance. He must acquire strength. A man who is weak cannot attain the Truth, therefore let him be strong. He must not think that he is a sinner, that he is born in sin and iniquity. On the contrary, he must feel imbued with the idea that he is a child of God; that although he may have made mistakes, yet there is hope for him because he is a child of God. Strengthening, lofty thoughts enable us to counteract the weakness which is so dominant in our nature at present. When our mind is fixed on a high Ideal and we become imbued with it, then our actions will spontaneously express it. Now we are constantly afraid. Wherefrom does this fear come? Is it our nature? Our nature is fearlessness, why bring into it something that is foreign? The Vedanta tells us: Shake off all weakness, all fear. A child of God should not be afraid of anything. If you want to rise, make yourself strong. But you must do it for yourself and you can only do it by right thinking. The mind is the instrument by which we accomplish everything. Our mind thinks, that thought creates, and what it creates we see in the external activity of our life. So we must train this mind. We must not let it run wild; but we must curb it and use discrimination. The world approaches us under two forms, one is good and the other pleasant. One appeals to our physical nature and the other to our deeper nature; but that deeper nature is not awake in all. There are some who almost forget that they possess a higher nature or that they have any connection with the Supreme. Yet the higher nature is there, latent within their heart; and when they appeal to that nature and try to judge everything through the light of that higher nature, it is gradually awakened and all their activity becomes directed by it. Then they cannot go

astray, they cannot do anything wrong.

As we unfold our spiritual consciousness, we think and live aright. Everything that approaches us we take at its proper valuation and not as it appears. Nothing can deceive us; therefore we do not labor for what is false and unreal. There are people who work faithfully, but they feel the burden of life because their effort does not bring the desired results. Why is this? It is because their effort is not controlled by discrimination; it is not directed by a purpose that is definite and single. Single-heartedness does not come until we have the higher faculty of discrimination awakened within us. Only then do we think consciously and we are not led away by passing fancies. If something arises that appeals to us and arouses our desire, we do not struggle to gain it without reflecting whether it is going to bring us a blessing or not. Human beings should not run after shadows. We are superior to animals in just this, that we have the power to discriminate; and only as we use it, shall we learn the secret of right thinking and right living. When our thoughts are free from impurity and self-consciousness, our light will shine. But how often we forget this and try to gain our selfish ends even by improper means. We believe too much in things which are temporary and neglect that which is lasting. When, however, our thoughts become connected with our inner nature, then not only will the light shine in the spiritual realm which now seems dark to us, but our life here will also be filled with clearness, directness and fearlessness.

The religious life does not mean devoting certain hours to the study of the Bible or some other Sacred Scripture; it means continuous life in accordance with the Higher Law. And nowhere do we find this more strikingly illustrated than in the Hindu life. It is said that the Hindus eat religion, drink religion, sleep religion. What is the significance of this?

That they do not wish to live without God; that they do not want to be separated for one moment from that Higher Consciousness. They believe that all their actions, from the least important to the loftiest, must start from that one central Consciousness. This is what we need to learn,—that at all times we must lead exalted lives, that every act shall be in harmony with our higher nature, that we shall serve our Ideal even at the cost of our life. Such characters are needed, and we can build them only by right thinking. We must not shut ourselves up in one set of doctrines and dogmas and believe that the whole spiritual Truth is confined in them. According to Vedanta, Truth is the common property of the whole human race; and whoever is wakeful, whoever applies the Truth, whoever lives the life, he is a follower of the Truth, whether he comes from the East or the West. A flower is a flower wherever it grows, and it gives the same fragrance to the one who tramples on it as to the one who cherishes it. That is the nature we should develop. We must not say, "This person does not appeal to me; I cannot love or serve him." The ordinary man does that. The flower does not refuse its fragrance to anyone; it gives what it has to give. Similarly our higher nature should be so unfolded that we can feel for all and give without asking anything.

When that comes, we can truly be called children of God. Then our religion will not be merely a matter of a creed or Scripture, it will be a reality; and this reality is religion. Religion is based on realization. Unless it has become real to us, no amount of argument or reasoning, no amount of observance of outer forms, can bring us anything. We must live the life without condemnation or denunciation. We must let our Soul manifest in us. If we have an Ideal, we must let it grow; and as it grows it will produce its own effect. What we need therefore is to cultivate our spiritual nature

and we do this by right thought. It does not matter what others may think, there is no reason why we should not think in the right way, for what we think, that we reflect. If we have love in our hearts, we send out into the universe a current of love which is united with a similar current; but if we hold unworthy, hateful thoughts, they will come back to us. We shall create conditions which will be hateful to us and which will set in motion forces that we shall afterwards regret, but which we shall not be able to resist. We can avoid this only by thinking from the beginning in the right way.

Our thought is the seed which determines the fruit of our action. If the seed is good, then the flowers and fruits which come from the seed must be good and must prove beneficial to ourselves and others. But if we plant in our hearts a poisonous seed, it will not only harm us but all who come in contact with us. Human life is a great responsibility. Only a thoughtless man will say: "I cannot help what happens. I am not responsible." We are constantly influencing ourselves and our fellow-beings by what we think; because our thought shapes our inner nature and we radiate consciously or unconsciously what we are. Let us be wakeful then. Let us be thoughtful in whatever we do. Let us be faithful to our True Self; for all blessings must come to us, if we prove ourselves true to our higher nature.

The beloved children of God renounce themselves, and hence they do right without effort, and mount up to the highest point of goodness, while he who will not let go of himself, but does right by labor and toil, will never reach the highest that he might. In other words: he whose works proceed from himself, does little good service to God; while he who suffers himself to be guided by the Holy Spirit, does great works even in small actions. *Tauler.*

SELECTION FROM THE LI-KI.

Texts of Confucianism

Righteousness is the accordance of actions with what is right.

Wisdom, benevolence, and fortitude:—these three are the universal virtues. That whereby they are carried into exercise is singleness.

Some are born with the knowledge of these; some know them by study; and some know them as the result of painful experience. But the knowledge being possessed, it comes to one and the same thing.

Some practise them with the ease of nature; some for the sake of their advantage; and some by dint of strong effort. But when the work of them is done, it comes to one and the same thing.

In all things success depends on previous preparation; without such preparation there is failure.

Perfection of nature is characteristic of Heaven. To attain to that perfection belongs to man. He who possesses that perfection hits what is right without any effort, and apprehends without any exercise of thought; he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the right way. He who attains to perfection is he who chooses what is good and firmly holds it fast.

He extensively studies what is good; inquires accurately about it; thinks carefully over it; clearly discriminates concerning it; and vigorously practises it. While there is anything he has not studied, or in what he has studied there is anything he cannot understand, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything he has not asked about, or anything in what he has asked about he does not know, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything he has not thought over, or anything in what he has thought about that he does

not know, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything concerning which he has not tried to discriminate, or anything in his discrimination that is not clear, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not practised, or any want of vigor so far as he has practised, he will not intermit his labor. . . . Let a man proceed in this way, and though stupid, he is sure to become intelligent; though weak, he is sure to become strong.

THE UPANISHADS AND THEIR MESSAGE TO THE MODERN MAN.

Extract of Address by P. L. Vaswani

I propose to regard the Upanishads from the point of view not of theology, but of literature; and I think a careful study of these volumes will show that the Upanishads are a contribution to World Literature. There are a few collections which we may regard as world volumes; which are not of local or provincial interest, but have universal value and are therefore classified as World Literature. One of these collections is associated with Hellenic genius; I refer to the ancient classics of Greek Literature. These books articulate the ideal concerning the civic spirit; they sound again and again the note that the duty of the individual is to subordinate himself to the State. This is a note which the world needs. The service of the State is man's duty and privilege. Another collection is the Hebrew Bible, charged with practical wisdom and with the supreme idea that the universe is fundamentally righteous. Another great Scripture is the Koran. The Sovereignty of God and the democracy of believers are the ideas set forth in the Koran. The Upanishads constitute another such collection and have, I claim, an imperishable place in World Literature. Not without reason have the

Upanishads fascinated men in different countries and at different times. Dura, the Moghul prince, had them translated into Persian; Latin and German translations followed; Schopenhauer was fond of them; the German philosophical world was influenced by them.

What is the meaning of the word Upanishad? The word may be interpreted in more than one way. Radically the word means "sitting down near," thus taking us to the far-off times when education demanded no elaborate external machinery, no costly buildings; when the big classes of today were unknown and the pupils sat near the teacher, sat round him on the ground, in Nature's lap, listening to lectures not behind closed doors but in the open air, thus growing in the grace of a higher life by daily communion with Nature's wonder and beauty. The word Upanishad means also "destroying all prejudice and ignorance," conveying thus an idea that he who seeks knowledge must rise above prejudice and acquire a catholic outlook on life. The total number of the Upanishads has been established to be eleven hundred and eighty; of these only one hundred and eight have survived the shock of centuries and have been translated into more than one language. A common misconception is that the Upanishads are infected with asceticism and other-worldism; that they have only a speculative, theoretic interest. It is undoubtedly true that there are in the Upanishads many things of speculative interest, again there are portions bearing upon psychology, and there are also passages which to me at present are unintelligible and enigmatic. But the Books, interpreted as a whole, are charged through and through with a message which is, I believe, of vital value to the modern man. Those who talk of the other-worldism and unpractical character of the Upanishads forget that the Rishis or Seers who composed them were householders, men possessed of practical wisdom,

practical idealists; men who had entered the stream of life and who taught their pupils, not as arm-chair academicians, but as Seers of the Secret of Life. The teachings embodied in these Books were given also to students who were in due course to become householders themselves; and the Great Ones who gave the teachings were men who more than once had been familiar with the problems of civilization and social development. In the Books, for example, the world is represented as a growing tree, which is an anticipation of what we call today the organic conception of Society.

The Upanishads undoubtedly have a message for the modern mind. It is a message of obedience to the laws of life; and according to my reading of the thought of the Rishis, there are four fundamental laws of life. One of these is the Law of Veracity. Our public life is poor because it is a life of compromise and conformity, our civilization is full of contradictions. The Law of Veracity says to us: Be loyal to your higher impulses, convictions and aspirations; worship the Truth in the face of the world's opposition, and though you be poor and obscure, your work will abide and your words will not pass away. Remember, your deepest Self is God; why then be afraid of the world? Another law is the Law of Dharma or Duty. To do one's duty is to be Brahman-like, God-like. What is Brahman? The answer given over and over again in the Upanishads is: Brahman is *Ananda* (the Spirit of Joy). God is joy, love is joy, and your duty is to communicate joy to those who come within the sphere of your influence. Look around you, into your homes and streets and shops, into your schools and colleges and temples, at your activities, organizations and associations, do you see the play of joy? Look into the faces of the students: do they show that they feel the joy of knowledge? Look into your offices, do you see joy in the faces of the clerks? Look into your

streets and see the laborers: are they happy? Look into your homes, into your temples, do you find joy dwelling therein? Examine the condition of the poor people, do they appear as sons of Eternal Joy?

The third great law is the Law of Race Solidarity. When the pupil in ancient India finished his course of studies, he came to the Teacher, the *Guru,* for blessings and advice; and the *Guru* in his parting message to the student about to enter the world said: "See that the thread of your race is not broken." Patriots—Poets they were, the Singers of the Upanishads; they had a profound perception of this Law of Race Solidarity. . . . Emphasis is also laid on body-building in these Books. It is wrong to say that the Upanishads ignore or despise the material basis of life. The body, the *Sthula-sharira,* is in these Books regarded as a mystic temple of the Highest; so it was that every student had to take the vow of *Brahmacharya* (continence and purity). Another thing on which emphasis is laid is Nature communion. "Hearken to the Soul of Nature," said the great Zoroaster; so sang also the Poet-Prophets of the Upanishads. They had faith in Nature more than in machinery; they believed in the value of silence-periods. Our bodies and minds are in the midst of disturbing influences; when shall we realize that there is strength in silence; that in the silence-periods sound the voices of Nature which speak not in crowded cities; that in the silence come the mighty stirrings of the Spirit? Such periods of quiet communion with the wonder of Nature will train our will towards life and prepare us for real service. Great thoughts, great ideas, great resolutions are born, not in the stormy days of life's fever, but in the periods of close fellowship with the simple and profound secrets of Nature.

The fourth great law of life discerned by the Upanishads is the Law of Self-Renunciation. "Rejoice in the Lord

through self-renunciation"—such is the declaration of the Books. The world, according to these Singers of the Upanishads, is an act of Divine sacrifice; the universe is God's self-offering of joy; and over and over again is the teaching given concerning the joy of giving, the joy of sacrifice. This is the great message of the Upanishads to you, to me, to every one who means to play his part in the struggles and strivings of the modern world. There is a touching little story of a pupil who, after a good deal of study and practice in the art of singing, comes to the music master, sings in his presence and waits for his verdict. "You sing well," says the master, "you sing well, but you will never sing divinely until you have offered your all on the altar of love." So spoke the master to his pupil, so I whisper to you tonight. You may come and tell me: "But we have no great talents; we have none of the world's treasure; we are poor and unknown; what can we give?" And I say, why call yourselves poor? Are you not sons of the Eternal? Princes are you all, why then regard yourselves as weak? The world's treasure—earth's silver and gold, titles and pomp and power and dominion—not these the need of the world. You have what God wants,—your aspiration, your thoughts of sympathy, your love and service. Offer these, offer your little at the altar of Love. (From *The Vedanta-Kesari,* Madras.)

A new philosophy we can hardly expect, or wish for; since indeed the same germinal thoughts of the Vedic authors come all the way down history even to Schopenhaur and Whitman, inspiring philosophy after philosophy and religion after religion. But it is only today that our knowledge of the world enables us to recognize this immense *consensus*: and it is only today that Science, with its huge conquests in the material plans, is able to provide—for these old-world

principles—somewhat of a new form, and so wonderful a garment of illustration and expression as it does. The philosophy of the Upanishads was nothing if not practical.

—*Edward Carpenter.*

Go to the East; and as a limit to your horizon, to India. Cast your eyes over the universal symbolism which is everywhere obvious, and everywhere doubtless expressive; and seek with candor and sincerity, what it expresses . . .Beneath all this there is, undoubtedly, some idea; but what is it? For myself, I confess that very often, notwithstanding some preliminary studies, as I consider anew the monuments of this ancient civilization, my opinions bend and are troubled. But I need only read some pages of a philosophical work of that period, and at once order, clearness, and precision, return into my thoughts. A great and sure light spreads over this mysterious civilization; and the whole spirit of its worship, of its arts and of its laws, reflected upon this single point, is wholly revealed. —*Victor Cousin.*

REPORTS.

On the evening of the 31st of May Swami Paramananda gave his annual dinner to the students and friends of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, as usual the dishes being all prepared by the Swami himself. About fifty guests were present and were seated at tables in the library of the Centre. The key-note of the intellectual feast of the evening was Emerson, introduced by Mr. Clark who gave his personal reminiscences of the great Philosopher-Poet. The subject was suggested by a series of lectures which the Swami had recently given on Emerson and Vedanta. Mr. Orth then followed with some delightful remarks concerning Liszt and both he and Mr. Clark expressed personal gratitude to the

Swami and the teaching. Mrs. Jones spoke most gracefully and appreciatively and Miss Sherwood, the Secretary of the Centre gave a short talk on the spread of the work in Los Angeles. Mrs. Spaulding in her usual happy vein called attention to the fact that under the Vedanta roof real Internationalism could be found, and there all peoples could meet on a common ground of brotherhood and peace. It was a remarkable fact that in this small gathering there were Spanish, French, Swiss, German, English, Canadians, Hindus and Americans. The Swami spoke several times as he introduced the speakers and made the connecting links between the addresses, giving the words of welcome and the final ones of peace and good-will. Everyone pronounced the occasion one of the most delightful ever held at the Centre and there was a standing vote of thanks given to the Swami and also a message of loving greeting was sent to Sister Devamata who is now conducting the work in Los Angeles.

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Although the usual season of work in Washington was reduced this year to one week only, it proved as rich in results as the much longer seasons of previous years. During her brief stay Sister Devamata delivered three public lectures and held three classes, besides which she gave a talk at the National New Thought Centre. Her days were also filled with personal interviews. The practical value of the teaching seemed to impress people as never before, and a large number of strangers came regularly to the meetings and sought personal help as well. The seating capacity of the hall proved inadequate at the first lecture, and at the final one between thirty and forty people stood through the entire meeting. On leaving Washington Sister Devamata went directly to Los Angeles, where for the present she will remain in charge of the Vedanta Centre there. Besides the regular Sunday morning service and bi-weekly classes, she has begun a course of public lectures which will continue throughout the month of June.

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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FAITH AND SELF-RELIANCE.

By Swami Paramananda.

The Bhagavad-Gita declares that the man of unflinching faith who has mastered his senses attains wisdom, and having attained wisdom, he enjoys supreme peace; but for the one who lacks in faith there is happiness neither in this world nor the next, because he destroys his own happiness by his doubting nature. Then in another chapter it says: "Let a man raise himself by his own Self". Thus in these two passages there seem to run two apparently opposing principles, one of faith and one of self-reliance; and the question inevitably arises in our minds, how can we harmonize these two? If we have unwavering faith in God and leave everything to Him as the only Doer, there is nothing left for us to accomplish by our own individual will. Where then is the place for self-reliance? A man who trusts in God cannot trust in himself. Looking from the outside, these two ideals seem to contradict each other; yet there is not so much difference between them as we imagine. True self-reliance does not mean reliance on one's physical strength; it means reliance on something mightier, something which is less perishable. When through discrimination we can realize our identity with That which is Invisible and Unchangeable, we are able to trust in That and

the man who follows the path of righteousness. It is only as we awaken the latent Divinity within us and come to know our Higher Self that we gain true faith. Actually it does not matter what method we adopt, whether of faith or self-reliance; both mean a struggle to relate ourselves with that One Being whom we call God or the Infinite Spirit or Truth. It is One without a second; and until we have established relationship with that One by cultivating moral strength, we shall not find peace. But we cannot do this until we are willing to live the life. We must conquer all our lower propensities, we must seek to discover that part of our being which is infinite. Only so shall we gain the courage and wisdom necessary to carry us Godward.

So long as we believe in our heart of hearts that our capacity is limited and we grow anxious or unhappy, we are lacking in faith. One who truly trusts in God has no right to be anxious about anything. He never loses his sense of complete surrender. This state of mind is not born of any special condition of life, it is a matter of individual unfoldment. A beggar can have just as much arrogance and egotism in identifying himself with his poverty as the rich man in identifying himself with his riches; both are equally far from the goal. One who has spiritual vision does not care where he may be placed; whether in the midst of turmoil or in the quietness of solitude, he maintains his inner balance; and we read in the Scriptures, he who is self-possessed—that is, possessed by his Higher Self—and who by the sword of wisdom has cut asunder the doubt born of the lower self has reached the highest. This is the goal of all living beings. We are all consciously or unconsciously marching towards that goal; but unless we follow a practical method, we shall not attain it. No amount of theory or imagination can help us gain it. Every religion

or philosophy offers us some method, based either on self-reliance or self-surrender, and it is for us to choose one or the other and practise it.

The idea of faith is often misunderstood by people, because they associate it with those who are ignorant, uneducated, and who have no power to investigate for themselves. But faith is not blind belief. It is never well founded until it is based on experience. Vedanta teaches that each individual must prove everything for himself before he can have faith. Realization is the basis of all true faith. Otherwise, if we merely believe without knowing, we are no better than the parrot who may be taught to repeat holy names, but who, as soon as it sees a cat approaching, forgets everything and only utters its natural cry. In the same way we may have wonderful theoretical ideals; but until we have put them into practice and proved them by experience, we are powerless to withstand the difficulties which confront us every day. A superficial acceptance of any religion is not faith. Religion is never a question of following a creed or attending a church. Religion is something which every individual must work out for himself or herself; and we cannot call ourselves religious until through our life we prove the reality of God and the reality of our own Soul. Merely talking about lofty ideals does not make us religious. Therefore again and again we are reminded by the Vedic Seers that we must live our religion, we must practise. Until we have penetrated to the depth of our being and perceived our own possibilities, we cannot fathom anything; there will always be many things which will remain obscure to us. Now doubt of self rises because we do not know what we are. Instead of believing that we have a mighty, indestructible Soul, we believe in death and are afraid to die. Our conception of immortality is based on words only.

Therefore we should try to get a glimpse of That which is beyond. This we are asked to do by all great Teachers.

But how can we do it? We must apply either one or the other of these ideals. The two ways are open to us all. If it appeals to you to trust in God and not depend on yourself, then do it. Even when you fail and everything is crumbling around you, hold fast to your faith in God; know that He is all-loving, all-protecting. If you can do this, you will find yourself protected and guided at every moment. If that ideal does not appeal to you, then seek within yourself, find what is Real, and do not be deluded by that which is perishable and limited. Some people are naturally energetic and egotistic and find it difficult to have faith; but if they can direct their activities inward and begin to investigate their own nature, they will in time through their spiritual seeking gain possession of That which is imperishable. Then they will realize what the monists declare: "I am He. There is no difference between me and that Infinite Spirit; for this body is not my whole being; I am Spirit, I am the Soul, I am one with God." Thus they will be able to shake off all imperfections and limitations. Often people say: "I am all-Good, I am all-Truth;" but their actions betray them. They do not live out their words and such theoretical statements weaken rather than strengthen their spiritual faith. One who recognizes the value of an Ideal should put it into practice, not misuse it. What we need is to apply the ideals which are given to us in the different Bibles of the world and prove ourselves true to them. Difficulties are sure to arise, but they are not permanent; they come and go. Whenever we meet them, we must remember that they are born of finite conditions and are bound to dissappear. We must maintain our balance and keep our faith unflinching.

There is but one goal and that is to transcend the limitations of our body and mind, and through our thoughts and deeds to strengthen our spiritual nature. Only as we are able to serve our Ideal will our limitations disappear. One who serves his Ideal faithfully, even though no one may recognize what he is doing or give him credit for it, will expand; and with him his Ideal will also expand. Until we can enrich our lives and make all our thoughts and actions worthy of the Divine Being, we cannot have true faith either in ourselves or in God. One who does not do right, who does not speak the Truth, how can he have faith in anything? But when we learn to live worthily, faith in ourselves increases and faith in God increases in the same proportion. We believe then that we are children of God, children of immortality, that nothing can destroy us; and this idea at once takes away all our impatience and selfishness, all our jealousy, intolerance and narrowness. We do not feel any weakness, because we know that the Infinite Ocean of strength is flowing into us so long as we keep the channel open. We do not want to take from others, because we know that there are infinite possessions behind us. As through discrimination and spiritual vision we thus realize our own Divine heritage, we are able to take our stand as human beings and as worthy children of God; then only can we do our duty towards our fellowmen. When we prove the reality of our spiritual nature, not only do we help and bless ourselves, but we bless many. Think of the influence of a spiritual character on others! It lasts through the ages. The message which Buddha gave five hundred years before the Christian era still lives. A spiritual Ideal always gives inspiration to others; and whenever we begin to unfold our spiritual nature, we bring benediction to mankind. Therefore we must believe in our power to unfold. We

must become more trusting in God and we must have greater faith in ourselves. We must cease to put our trust in things which are fleeting and perishable. At every step of our life let us use discrimination, let all our actions be guided not by impulse but by wisdom, and let us seek that wisdom from the Infinite Source.

BENGALEE HYMN.

(Translated especially for "The Message of the East")

O Lord! The embodiment of All-Goodness art Thou. This do I know;
For all the day come new proofs of Thy Mercy.
Happiness or misery do Thou send me as Thou deemest best;
Naught can affright me.
But whatever Thou willest, this only I pray—do not leave me.
Come! Come within my heart, O Lord!
Then must all be well with me;
For I know, Gracious Lord, that Thou art the embodiment of All-Goodness.

Since the last end of man is the union of the soul with God as the beginning and centre of all things; and since this union consists in love, which cannot be without an entire conformity of our will with the will of God; the order of things requires that we should now apply ourselves to the contemplation of this heavenly virtue. This conformity is defined as "a habitual disposition of the soul, in which one is always ready to do or to suffer whatever is pleasing to God." —*Saint Ignatius of Loyola.*

THE NEED OF AN IDEAL.

By Sister Devamata.

When a child begins to write, he is given a copybook with a line at the top of each page to copy. If he wishes to draw, a plaster cast or some simple object is put before him as model. Does he take up music, the teacher places her hand in the right position on the keys to show him how he must hold his. Imitation of something lies at the bottom of all education and growth. The baby learns to walk and talk by watching or listening to others. His elders serve as a constant suggestion and stimulus to his unfolding powers and his chief ambition is to reproduce them. Within him undoubtedly there is an impelling desire for self-expression, but the form which such expression takes is largely determined by his outer environment and association. One of the first conscious acts of the growing boy or girl is the choice of some example to follow—a bigger brother or sister, some hero of the hour, a character in history, or perhaps only a champion ball-player. Whatever the bent of mind or age, always every human being is measuring up to some abstract or concrete ideal that towers above the level of his own capacity. Even the thief looks to some defter thief as model. Never can man, however vain, cover his own horizon line; the greatest sting to his vanity is that there is always something in the unseen beyond which overshadows him and reminds him of his littleness. He cannot be his own god, however he may try. Behind every created form one senses the presence of a faultless pattern, the archetype or prototype, as Plato called it, which Nature is vainly striving to make manifest. Everywhere the Absolute Ideal beckons and evades us, luring us on to final perfection.

No living being is without some ideal. Each act he per-

forms presupposes one. But with the great majority, it remains vague and shifting; and that is why most human lives are so fruitless and disappointing. In target practice, we know, the bull's eye must be clearly defined, otherwise the gunner's aim will be wavering and his shot ineffective. So in life and especially in the spiritual life. We must have some definite, concrete Ideal to follow, in the beginning at least. As we advance, it will spontaneously grow more subtle and abstract. But we are children in the spiritual world and everything must be made distinct for the child mind. An oral definition or a sign of the hand is not enough; the letter or figure must be drawn large on a blackboard. The object-lesson is vital in early training. It was the recognition of this need which led in India to the system of discipleship as the best means of attaining spiritual efficiency, just as in mediaeval Europe apprenticeship was considered essential to secular efficiency. When the soul-consciousness awakens, the first step, according to Indian teaching, is to find the Guru or Master who embodies the Ideal and who will thus provide a model which the disciple may copy. Close daily association with a holy life is regarded as the surest means of gaining holiness; and no instruction imparted through precepts is believed to be so potent as that of a living example held constantly before the eyes. We know how sometimes even to read of a saintly character will kindle a new fire of devotion in our hearts.

It was to give us definite ideals of godliness that all the Saviours came to earth; and one of the chief marks of their greatness is the precision and definiteness of their teaching. Nothing is left vague or hazy. To Jesus the Father in Heaven was not a subtle metaphysical abstraction. He was more real than any earthly father and the relation He bore to Him was as familiar and intimate. This is one of

the fundamental lessons of His life,—that God must be to us a living, pulsing reality. We cannot love air or fire or water, even though we recognize that they are necessary to our physical existence, because they are without outline and evasive; so as long as the Supreme remains to us a vague, undefined Principle, we shall never feel true love for Him and by love alone can we gain union with Him. We must bring him near to our hearts by entering into some natural relation with Him.

To many it may seem a superstition to conceive of Deity in so human and so familiar an aspect. The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem even denounced it as blasphemy, when a half century before Christ's birth Rabbi Hillel, the leader of the Hellenic movement which then swept over Palestine, began to preach the Fatherhood of God. But this prejudice is based wholly on a misconception of the reason and purpose of a clearly defined Ideal in the spiritual life. It is not meant to represent or describe the Infinite. A sum-total of all conceivable names and relationships could not do that; the Infinite would still remain undefined and indescribable. Its purpose is to create a point of contact with God. We can never by any effort of ours gain knowledge of the Absolute. The lesser can never compass the greater. It is He who must reveal Himself to us. "He whom the Divine Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained," the Vedic Scriptures declare; and that one is chosen who is seeking knowledge of the Higher Self. Only he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled. Our heart must be turned towards God. In ordinary life we do not attempt to explain anything to a person whose attention is wholly fixed in another direction; so God knows that it is useless to try to reach us so long as our thought is absorbed in other things. It is not easy, however, even for the earnest

seeker to fix his attention upon a formless abstraction; there is nothing upon which to fasten and the heart wanders. Let the Supreme Being, on the contrary, become to us a definite conception,—a real Mother, a real Father, a real Friend and Companion; at once it grows easy to think of Him and live with Him, a point of contact is established, and He can gradually reveal to us all aspects of His Divine Being.

If it is less difficult for us to acquire this sense of unbroken association with the Divine through some visible form —a God-illumined character or an Incarnation—then we should take that one which makes the strongest appeal to our spiritual nature and follow him with steadfast devotion. It matters not through what channel we gain contact with God; it is enough to touch Him at any point and salvation is ours. He who purifies himself by unfaltering service to his Ideal "easily attains the infinite bliss born of contact with the Supreme;" such is the promise of the Bhagavad-Gita. We must never forget, however, whatever the lesser example we hold before us, that God is the Supreme Goal. The Gita lays insistent stress on this. All our life and effort must be directed towards Him alone, and only those interests and associations should be cultivated which strengthen our relation with Him. Whatever obscures His Face and weakens our yearning for His companionship must be eliminated, no matter at what sacrifice of worldly advantage. We must seek out those who stimulate us on the God-side, and gradually withdraw from those who foster the thoughts and habits that smother our higher impulses. Nor is this selfishness. To what end do we live among our fellowmen? Is it to pamper them in their weaknesses or to benefit them? If to benefit them, then what greater good can we do them than to lead them to loftier ideals by being true to our own?

But it is not enough to possess an Ideal; we must make it a working model after which our whole life is patterned. It would profit the child little to carry his copybook round under his arm, he must fill its pages with pothooks and letters. An Ideal is equally useless to us unless we are striving to follow it day by day and hour by hour. We must meditate on the character, the life, the words, all that the Ideal represents and try to reproduce that in ourselves. If we desire to match a color, we go from shop to shop always laying our sample against each piece of cloth shown us; in the same way we should refer each act and thought and word to our Ideal. This will keep us open to its purifying influence and gradually we shall form the habit of constant communion with it. We do not realize that spirituality is a habit, courage and steadfastness and singleness of heart are habits; and the easiest method of forming these habits is by association, either in thought or in outer life, with one who possesses them. When we live with people, unconciously we grow to talk and walk and act like them; and when we live every moment with a pure Ideal, quickly do we grow to resemble it. Man must always imitate something. He must strive for something. Let him take whatever seems holiest and highest to him, keep that before him, copy it, think of it, serve it, love it; little by little it will fade away and in its place will stand the Supreme Ideal, God Himself.

Dost thou of a truth desire Him the Hidden to discover?
Then go look for Him, O seeker, with the longing of a lover;
Go not groping in the dark with learning's horny lantern dim,
Borrow eyes of those who love Him; thus, O seeker, look for Him. —*Jalaluddin Rumi.*

REVEL IN BLISS.

By the Tamil Poet Tayumanavar.

The Light which is the beginning and hath no beginning, which shineth in me as Bliss and Thought, appeared as the Silent One. He spake to me, sister, words not to be spoken.

The words that were spoken, how shall I tell? Cunningly He seated me all alone with nothing before me. He made me happy, beloved, He grasped me and clung to me.

He bade me put all other things aside and cling to Him within. What I got as I clung to Him, how shall I tell? He spake of things never spoken, beloved.

I had wandered about, babbling, telling of untold woes, a mere devil-ridden body. But the Lord drove away the demon of desire, and held me down at His feet, beloved.

Holding down, withdrawing the senses, I gathered love for His form. He folded me unto Himself, sister, and blended with me so that I could not speak at all.

"Whatsoever thy heart hitherto hath looked upon in its thought as real and unreal, cast away," said my Lord, and He made me Himself. Behold His cunning, sister.

"The earthly and other elements thou art not; reflect—the earthly organs of action and sense thou art not. Thou art pondering Thought." Blissful are the words that the Lord spoke in love, sister.

To His lovers He is love; He is true, my Lord. The blissful Silent One, the gracious Master, laid His foot on my head. Lo, I knew myself, I died to sense.

I considered how death and birth came to be companions to me. They grew, beloved, from the treacherous illusive Sense which is alike oblivion and thought.

O Sense, was it not for me that God came under the banyan tree as the Silent Teacher, and with dumb show of

hand annulled the works that were mine and set me in the blissful ocean of His Grace?

"Think not in thy heart of Me as other than thee; be thou without second." When he uttered this one word, how can I tell the bliss that grew from that word?

The field where grew the bliss of Siva, that pure space I drew near. Weeding out the weeds of darkness, I then looked. Save the Lord's splendor, I saw naught, sister.

Life, the laughing-stock of all that see, with both our eyes we see depart; it passeth away as in sleep. Say, what good, what merit, is there in it, sister?

To me who knew naught of good, He granted the search for the pure Stillness that is beyond the Sound. He rid me of all unrest, the all-powerful One; with his foot He struck my head, sister.

The blessed Light of Bliss that struck me by His grace made me, who am less than an atom, into perfect Fulness without motion hither or thither. Lo, the strangeness of it, sister.

Making, maintaining, destroying—all these are the works of the Almighty, yet they touch Him not, not so much as a grain of sesame. On this true Witness it is well to think, sister.

There Thought is born, there Thought dieth away and is purified; there all states are; there I who see am standing without second.

Is there a "there" or a "here" when the glory of the Trinity of Being, Thought, and Bliss hath been seen arising and spreading abroad in undivided manifestation? Can we speak then of *one* or *two*?

Is there a Yea and a Nay? If thou wouldst have bliss, thou wilt know it by abiding awhile as Understanding: thus is the mystic rule that our Lord spake, sister.

GOD-LOVE.

Extract by Swami Vivekananda.

Why a man should love God is the question to be solved; and until we understand that, we shall not be able to grasp the subject of *Bhakti* (devotion) at all. There are two entirely different ideals of life. A man of any country who has any religion knows that he is a body and a spirit also. In Western countries, as a rule, people lay more stress on the body aspect of man; those philosophers who have written on *Bhakti* in India lay stress on the spiritual side of man; and this difference seems to be typical of Oriental and Occidental nations. It is so even in common language. In England, when speaking of death, it is said a man gives up the ghost; in India, a man gives up his body. The one idea is that man *is* a body and *has* a soul, the other that man *is* a soul and *has* a body. It naturally follows that the ideal which holds that man is a body and has a soul, lays all the stress on the body. If you ask why man lives, you will be told that it is to enjoy the senses, to enjoy possessions and wealth. He cannot dream of anything beyond, even if he is told of it; his idea of a future life will be a continuation of this enjoyment. He is very sorry that it cannot continue all the time here, but he has to depart; so he thinks that somehow or other he will go to some place where the same thing will be renewed. He will have the same enjoyments, the same senses, only heightened and strengthened. He wants to worship God because God is the means to attain his end. The goal of his life is enjoyment of sense objects, and he comes to know that there is a Being who can give him a very long lease of these enjoyments; that is why he worships God.

The Indian idea, on the other hand, is that God is the goal of life; there is nothing beyond God, and these sense enjoy-

ments are simply something through which we are passing now in the hope of getting better things. Not only so; it would be disastrous and terrible if man had nothing but sense enjoyments. In our everyday life we find that the less the sense enjoyments, the higher the life of the man. And the lower the man, also the more delight he finds in the senses. As he rises higher, the goal becomes reason and love. In proportion as these faculties develop, he loses the power of enjoying the senses. For illustration's sake, if you take for granted that a certain amount of power is given to man and can be spent either on the body, or the mind, or the Spirit; then all the power spent on any one of these leaves just so much less to be expended on the others. The ignorant or savage races have much stronger sensual faculties than the civilized races; and this is, in fact, one of the lessons we learn from history,—that as a nation becomes civilized, the nerve organization becomes finer and it becomes physically weaker. Civilize a savage race and you will find the same thing: another barbarian race comes up and conquers it. It is nearly always the barbarian race that conquers. We see then that if we desire only to have sense enjoyments all the time, we degrade ourselves to the brute state.

We cannot conceive of any higher enjoyment than that of love, but this word has different meanings. It does not mean the ordinary selfish love of the world; it is blasphemy to call this love. That love which is perfectly unselfish is the only love and that is of God. It is a very difficult thing to attain to. No one in this world can really love anything but God. Man finds out that human love is all hollow. Men cannot love, though they talk of it. A finite object cannot love, nor a finite object be loved. When the object of the love of a man is dying every moment and his mind also is

constantly changing as he grows, what eternal love can you expect to find in the world? There cannot be any real love but in God, why then all these loves? These are mere stages. There is a power behind impelling us forward; we do not know where to seek for the real object, but this love is sending us forward in search of it. Again and again we find out our mistake. We grasp something and find it slips through our fingers; then we grasp something else. Thus on and on we go, till at last comes light. We come to God, the only One who loves. His love knows no change and is ever ready to take us in. How long would any of you bear with me if I injured you? He in whose mind is no anger, hatred or envy, who is he but God?

But the path to God is long and difficult, and very few people attain Him. We are all babies struggling. A few men in a century attain to that love of God and the whole country becomes blessed and hallowed. It is true that few such are born in any one century in the whole world, but all should strive to attain that love of God. Who knows but you or I may be the next to attain? Let us struggle therefore. We always find that when more intense objects of love come to us the previous love slowly vanishes. Children at school think of their schoolfellows as the dearest beings that they have in life, or their fathers or mothers; then comes the husband or wife and immediately the old feeling disappears and the new love becomes uppermost. One star rises; another bigger one comes; then a still bigger one; and at last the sun comes and all the lesser lights vanish. That sun is God. The stars are the smaller loves. When that sun bursts upon him a man becomes mad, what Emerson calls "a God-intoxicated man." He becomes transfigured into God, everything is merged in that one ocean of love.

THE STORY OF PRAHLADA.

There was a great king of the Daityas called Hiranyakashipu. He had succeeding in vanquishing his cousins, the Devas, and having seated himself upon the throne of the heavens, he ruled over the three worlds. Believing himself invincible and above all living beings, he made a proclamation declaring that he was God of the whole universe, that like unto him there was none, not even the mighty Lord Vishnu, therefore all worship should henceforth be offered to him alone. But Hiranyakashipu had a son, whose name was Prahlada. From his babyhood the boy was devoted to God. Perceiving this tendency in his son, the king of the Daityas, fearful lest in his own family there might rise one to cloud his glory, gave the boy to the care of two teachers, Shanda and Amarkya, who were enjoined never to allow Prahlada to hear the name of God.

The prince was taken to their home and placed among their pupils. But the lad, instead of studying his lessons, spent all his time in teaching his playmates how to worship the Most High. When Shanda and Amarkya discovered this, they were filled with terror, for the great king Hiranyakashipu was cruel and relentless and they feared his wrath. They did their utmost to silence the child, but worship was as natural to him as breathing and he could not remember to obey them. To protect themselves they appealed to the king, saying that the prince was corrupting the whole school by teaching everyone to worship the Lord Vishnu.

When his father heard it, he grew very angry and summoned his son. First he tried gently to dissuade the boy from his devotion to Vishnu and to convince him that he, the king, was the only Lord to be worshipped. But Prahlada continued to declare that worship belonged only to the

Lord of the Universe, for even the king himself held his throne only by the grace of the Supreme. Then the wrath of Hiranyakashipu passed beyond all bounds and he ordered his son to be killed. The soldiers struck the lad again and again with sharp weapons, but the child's thought was so fixed on God that he felt no pain. This frightened the angry Sovereign, yet he dared not desist, for his own power and authority were at stake, so he determined to torture the boy into submission. He had him thrown under the feet of a wild elephant, but the boy's body resisted as if it were a rod of iron; it could not be crushed.

Next they threw him over a high precipice; but taking the Name of the Lord, Pralada dropped softly on the earth as a flower petal on a tuft of moss. Then he was plunged into boiling oil, but he remained unharmed. At last the king commanded him to be bound to a mighty sea-serpent and cast to the bottom of the ocean; but the boy as he plunged cried out: "Salutation to Thee, Lord of the Universe, Thou All-Glorious One!" At once the water, the serpent, all the perils of the deep vanished and he felt the loving arms of the Supreme Protector enfolding him. He seemed one with God; one with every danger that threatened him, one with the sea, one with the mighty monster glaring at him. Everywhere he turned he saw God, what could he fear? Suddenly the snake-bonds snapped, the ocean heaved and a motherly wave layed him tenderly on the beach. As Prahlada stood gazing at the receding waters, all earthly things fell from him. He forgot that he had a mortal body, time stood still, space melted away, his consciousness merged in the Infinite Consciousness and he passed into an indescribable ecstasy of bliss.

When the king found that the boy could not be destroyed by mortal means, he again made gentle appeal to him to

honor God in the father's form; but Prahlada still refused to bow before him. Then the king determined to bend his spirit by subtler means; so he sent him back to Shanda and Amarkya with the command that he be instructed in the duties of a ruler. But Prahlada paid little heed to their words and all the day he talked to his playmates of the joy of devotion to the Ruler of the world.

Then Hiranyakashipu gave way to uncontrollable passion and sending for the boy, he heaped upon him the most violent abuse. The boy watched him with quiet wondering eyes and still proclaimed that God alone was Lord of all. "This God of yours," the king roared, "if he be omnipresent is he perchance in yonder carven pillar?" "He is," the child replied with unwavering conviction. "Then let him defend himself and thee," the king cried striking a deadly blow at the pillar as he rushed upon it with uplifted sword. A thundering voice was heard and out of the pillar sprang a terrifying form. The Daityas fled in all directions panic-stricken; but Hiranyakashipu fought long and desperately until he was finally overpowered and killed.

Then the Devas descended from the heavens and sang joyous hymns of praise to the Most High. Prahlada also fell prostrate and poured forth his heart in humble devotion. As he prayed, he heard the voice of God saying: "Thou art my beloved child. Ask, Prahlada, ask anything. It shall be given thee." But Prahlada replied: "For what, O Lord, can I ask? I have seen and know Thee. Tempt me not, O Gracious Lord, with gifts either of this earth or of the heavens". But again the voice insisted: "Yet ask of Me one boon at least, my child." Then Prahlada replied: "That intense love which the ignorant bear towards earthly things, grant, O Lord, that I may have that intensity of love for Thee; but only for love's sake."

EDUCATION IN INDIA

By Lady Katherine Stuart.

(Excerpt from address delivered before the East Indian Association, London.)

In the West we look upon education as a means to an end, that end being a livelihood to be earned; but in the East, where a man can make do with a mat, a garment, and one meal a day, a means of livelihood becomes a secondary consideration and education becomes the end and not the means. You do not learn to live, you live to learn, and you continue learning till you arrive at the burning-ghat, at the feet of a succession of Spiritual Gurus. True culture! This is the goal of life to an Oriental, not fame and fortune. He aspires to *be* rather than to *do*. The Indian believes firmly that ideas govern the world, and that the greatest thing a man can do for his day and generation is to enrich it with fresh thought.

A Hindu child, some ten or twelve years of age, showed a remarkable aptitude for Sanskrit. Help was afforded him in his studies by a European lady. Upon the road up to the hills, the boy contrived to lose a warm garment with which his parents had provided him, so it was proposed to supply him with another. The child steadily refused. "Mother," he said solemnly—"mother, do not give me *material* comforts, give me *wisdom*; then I shall not lose it by the way." A simple utterance, but eloquent of the Oriental attitude to life. In England *religion is for man*, in India *man is for religion*; and if man, how much more woman? Broadly speaking, if we ask ourselves: "Who is to teach England to be spiritual?" We must answer: "India." And again if we ask: "Who is to teach India to be practical?" We must reply: "England." May we not mutually accept this as the ultimate aim of the "Divinity that shapes our ends" in bringing us together?

In commenting on Lady Stuart's address, Lord Ronaldshay, the new Governor of Bengal, who presided, remarked:

"The whole life of India is built upon an atmosphere of religion; and this makes it all the more necessary that we should try to understand something of the spirit of Indian religious thought by recognizing that the religious practices of the country are characterized by much symbolism and are consequently open to much misunderstanding. I am quite sure that if once a man begins the study of the religions of India, he will very soon find himself absorbed in an intellectual life (a life in which religion and philosophy go hand in hand more harmoniously than anywhere else I know) transcending in interest that of any other country of which I have knowledge."

REPORTS.

A general Report of the Women's Work in Calcutta, carried on under the direction of the Ramakrishma Mission, has recently been received. The work was begun in 1901 by Sister Nivedita, under the personal inspiration of Swami Vivekananda; and was extended by Sister Christine, who since 1904 has been the ruling spirit in it, Sister Nivedita having devoted her energies chiefly to lecturing and writing during the last years of her life. The main centre of the work is in Bose Para Lane, where there is a Girls' School with an enrolment of 150 children and 37 advanced students. The Kindergarten system is employed during the first year, after which every effort is made to give the scholars a good foundation in their own language, with some knowledge of Sanskrit and English, also History, Geography, Arithmetic and the elements of Algebra and Geometry, cutting, sewing and painting. The advanced course, known as the Purdah Ladies' Department, consists of two divisions. In the one the young girls are given a more thorough schooling in the

branches already named, with instruction in modern scientific methods of teaching; in the other the students are carefully trained to be teachers and mistresses of schools. At the present time there are 14 widows in the first division and 6 married girls, whose husbands have been anxious to have them continue their education; and 17 ladies are following the normal course of the second division. The daily work of the school is being carried on by 13 of these ladies, and each member of the first division is also expected to teach the younger scholars two hours a day. For the last three years, during the absence of Sister Christine, the school has been conducted entirely by the older students under the direction of her assistant, Miss Sudhira Bose.

In 1914 a Home for women was established and its success has surpassed the expectations of its founders. The purpose of this *Matri-Mandir* or Temple of the Mother, as it is called, is to provide a home for Hindu girls who desire to devote their lives exclusively to the cause of education and service; and for a few select students who could not otherwise avail themselves of the privileges of the school. It also offers facilities to those who wish to learn nursing or some trade by which to earn their living.

* * * *

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston the work during the past three months has shown unusual activity. The course of lectures given by Swami Paramananda on "Emerson and Vedanta" and "Plato and Vedic Idealism" brought an exceptionally large number of strangers to the Centre, many of whom have become regular attendants. The Swami has now left for the West where he will resume charge of the Services and Classes at the Los Angeles Centre. The two Sunday services and the Tuesday evening Class will continue at the Boston Centre, being conducted by Sister Devamata, who recently returned from Los Angeles.

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"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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WHAT IS THE SOUL?

Class Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

There are many who claim that the universe is never really destroyed. Just as through the day many objects are visible, but on a dark night, although they are still there, they cannot be seen; so *Prahlaya* or dissolution, some say, is like that. The universe is still there, but cannot be perceived. Matter is indestructible. Forms come and forms go, but that which is behind all forms is indestructible, and that indestructible substance is called matter. Now there is a meeting here. It began at seven-thirty and will break up at eight-thirty; then the meeting will disappear, but those who formed the meeting will not vanish. In the same way the objects which constitute the universe may come and go, but that which makes up these objects does not go. For this reason forms are never real. Hence from this we learn that that which has a form, as a form, is not real. Only the formless can be real. A form, according to Geometry, is that which is bounded by lines; only that which is not bounded by lines, therefore, can be real, and that must be the infinite. Therefore the infinite alone is real and the infinite is God, hence God is the only reality.

The same reasoning applies to the human being. The Self which dwells in the body is not the body, so the

boundary line of the body is not its boundary line. Yet it is true that every part of this body is animated by the Self. If I touch your arm, I touch you, which shows that you are everywhere in the body. But although the Self or Soul is inside, it is not confined by the body. Now let us find out your boundary line. Your body exists, your mind exists and you exist. These three make up you,—body, mind and Self. But although you are connected with the body, yet every moment you prove that you are not the body, that it is merely something which you train and direct; therefore what is true of the body need not be true of you. Next, what is the mind? The mind is that which thinks, remembers and desires. So long as you have not arrived at a definite knowledge about a thing you keep on questioning and thinking. So thinking is the outcome of doubt. But Soul can have no doubt. It knows everything. Hence Soul or the Real Self within you is that which does not think; it is also that which does not will; for only he who doubts thinks and only he who desires wills. He who is perfectly rich desires nothing. Willing is based on desire, which comes from a sense of incompleteness, a lack somewhere. The Soul is free from self-will because it is wantless; and that which has no want is perfect, therefore the soul being free from want must be perfect.

Soul again can have no emotions. It has no anger, no pleasure or pain; for all these emotions create unrest and the Soul is absolutely calm. There is no wave in it. Emotion is a sign of weakness rather than of strength, for when an emotion agitates the mind it shows that the feeling is stronger than the mind and so overcomes it. But there is no feeling stronger than the Soul, hence it is never agitated. As Sri Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita, it is like the ocean into which many streams and rivers enter and are

lost, but it maintains its steady level. That undisturbed being goes by the name of Soul. You may add to it or take away from it, yet you can never increase or diminish it.

Thus studying body and mind, we see that they are limited; but Soul being different from body and mind, is unlimited. The body is born and grows. The mind, too, grows; the man's mind is not like the boy's mind. So body has growth and mind has growth; but this does not indicate greatness, it rather indicates weakness, because it shows them to be incomplete. But the Soul is that which never grows. It never changes. The boy at the high school is quite different from the baby in arms: the same body is not there, nor the same mind, but the same person is there. This proves to us that the Soul does not change. It is always the same. Therefore you must know that in your true nature you have no growth and if you do not grow, you do not change; and if you do not change, you must be all-full, all-perfect; and if you are all-perfect, you must be infinite.

It is that Self in you that knows. Do the eyes know anything or the ears? Does even the mind know anything? No, only when you come does this organism begin to perceive, will and remember. Mind can know only when you are there. The power of knowing is innate in you, it is not something you acquire; consciousness and you are synonymous. You are made up of consciousness. When this consciousness stands behind the mind as the astronomer behind the telescope, then it begins to know. Your eyes cannot see any more than the telescope sees the stars; nor can your ears hear, your tongue taste or your mind think. Being conscious also, you must be infinitely conscious, for consciousness is formless and hence is infinite. And if you are infinitely conscious,

you must be infinitely powerful. Nothing can overwhelm you. Food changes your body, what you hear and learn changes your mind, but nothing can change you. You are changeless and hence eternally calm. Also you must be birthless and deathless. But that which is formless, changeless, birthless and deathless is what is called Truth, so the Soul is Truth. The Soul again is eternal, peaceful, all-blissful, all-knowing; but this is what God is, and as things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, the Soul must be of like nature with God and one with Him. This is why the great Vedic Sages declare: *"Aham Brahmasmi"*, "I am Brahman or one with the Absolute."

But who are you? "I" is the label of this bodily manifestation. It is born with body and dies with body. But we know that when this body is worn out, there is something in the body which does not die; and that principle within is called the *Jivatman* or individual soul. Body, mind and ego make up man; mind and ego make up the *Jivatman*. *Jivatman* is that which existed prior to this present body and will exist after this body, but always in connection with a body, either gross or subtle. It is constantly developing; with each body it may get different experiences. It leaves one body and goes to another, therefore it has motion; but the *Paramatman* or Supreme Self of man has no motion. It is changeless and infinite; and being infinite it must be one. *Jivatmans* are innumerable and their life is unlimited; *Ahamkaras* or egos are also innumerable, but they die; while the *Paramatman* is one and deathless. *Ahamkaras* are many, *Jivatmans* are many, but *Paramatman* is one. It is the centre of the circle; and as there are many radii which meet in one centre, so while as radii we are many, we are all one in the centre, the *Paramatman*.

This *Paramatman* or Supreme Self seems to be occupying this body, but in reality He is occupying all bodies. He is everywhere. And how can we know Him? By going into our own Soul. We can find Him when the fire of wisdom has burned up the dross and separated the real from the unreal in us. This *Paramatman* is Truth, and all power is in Truth. Whatever goes away from Truth must perish; so falsehood has no hope, while Truth is life itself. It is always perfect. Therefore our first duty should be to unite ourselves with Truth by clearly understanding that from Truth we have come and not from falsehood. Blessed are they who realize that they have come out of Truth, in Truth they live and into Truth they will merge. And unfortunate are they who believe that out of matter they have come and that it is this world which gives them life. They are thirsting for life and courting death; they are seeking misery, imagining it to be happiness; they are drinking poison and taking it for nectar.

We ought to stand alone and single, i. e., severed from the multitude and crowd of things born and decaying, lovers of eternity and unity, if we desire to cleave to One God and Lord. —*Saint Augustine.*

THE LOVE OF THE SOUL.

By Jalalud-din Rumi. (Sufi Poet.)

The love of the Soul is for Life and the Living One,
Because its origin is the Soul not bound to place.
The Love of the Soul is for wisdom and knowledge,
That of the body for houses, gardens, and vineyards;
The love of the Soul is for things exalted on high,
That of the body for acquisition of goods and food.
The Love, too, of Him on High is directed to the Soul:
Know this, for "He loves them that love Him."

INNER COMMUNION.

By Rabbi Bachye.

(A Jewish Teacher of Spain, 11th Century.)

Every human being is bound, in proportion to his mental gifts, to keep account with his Soul, and to calculate what service of heart and mind he owes the Creator. Such contemplation concerning the Deity and man's relation to the Creator will show the duty of concentrating the heart on God's unity and spirituality, and on His service; so that there is no other thought or intention in all that one does, except to do it for the sake of God alone, with no thought of human praise or of the fear of man, or of advantages or of the removal of dangers in this world or in a future state.

A man should commune with himself in reference to the desires of his heart and his worldly tastes; and a careful consideration of the ends they serve will lead him to look with contempt on ephemeral possessions; and his thoughts and desires will be fixed on the highest good, and on what is of eternal value to his mind and Soul; and he will learn to strive only for what is barely necessary of the things of this world. He will desire to be kept both from poverty and riches, so that he may have enough for simple healthy life; and he will yearn after wisdom and spiritual possessions, of which no one can rob him.

One should also consider well, in communing with his Soul, whether he has made the best use of any wealth that he may possess, doing good with it. And he should meditate also on the many ways in which one man can help another; and consider that he should love for others what he loves for himself, and hate for others what he hates for himself, rejoicing in their joy and grieving at their sorrow. And he should be full of compassion for them and ward off from them, to the utmost of his power, anything that may

injure them; as it is said (Levit. xix.), "And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The intention of all separation from the world is only so that one may concentrate the whole heart upon the one object of love for the Creator, and that one may be filled with longing to fulfil His will. This perfect love of God is the primary aim and intention, as well as the end and fulfillment of all obligations taught by Reason, by Scripture, or by Tradition. This love of God is the yearning of the Soul for the Creator, and her turning of her own accord towards Him, so that she may be united with His light, which is the highest. That is, that the Soul, which is herself pure spirit, inclines more than any other spiritual being to her like, and in her very nature recedes from that which is her opposite,—from gross matter.

They who love God will do all that is right, without the hope of reward; and will forsake all that is evil, without the fear of punishment. They will also have no fear of anything, or of any person, in this or any other world, except of the Creator alone. And they will be indifferent to the praise and blame of men in doing the will of God. They will be pure in body as well as in mind, and fly from evil deeds of all kinds. They will serve the Creator not only in obedience to the laws of revelation, some of which are only binding in given circumstances, but also in the duties that are commanded by Reason and Conscience, and with every good spiritual quality.

See then, Serenus, that the perfect man, full of human and divine virtues, can lose nothing; his goods are surrounded by strong and impassable walls. The ramparts which protect the wise man are safe from fire and hostile invasion. They afford no passage; they are lofty, impregnable, divine. —*Seneca.*

THE BONDAGE OF IGNORANCE.

By Swami Paramananda.

Whenever we succeed in making ourselves silent, that is whenever we are able to withdraw from the external, then naturally and spontaneously we begin to talk with our own inner being. As a devout Saint of Bengal sings in a sacred hymn: "O Mind, why dost thou not cast off this lethargy and heaviness which holds thee back from that blessed communion? Why dost thou not meditate on that Supreme Being who is easily obtained through the power of devotion?" We are often afraid of cutting off our connection with the outside world. We fear it will be too lonely. The idea of retiring within ourselves does not appeal to us. When, however, we are able to retire within, we find there a companion—our own Higher Self, the very best part of us—who begins to guide us more wisely than anyone from whom we could ask guidance in the outer world, and through whose help we are able to discover things which were wholly unknown to us when we did not understand how to collect our forces and become indrawn.

It is the inherent tendency of every human being to seek companionship, but we usually look for it on the outside. If, however, we can become quiet, the mind will begin to talk with Someone within who will prove the truest companion. There are various methods by which we can purify ourselves and render this silent communion possible. When, for example, we do not use our voice and talk unnecessarily, then this energy which is being constantly manifested through our lips begins to move inward and lead us to the inner companion. This is what the Yogi tries to do through silence, discipline and the practice of concentration, in order that he may always be able to consult his Higher Self and thus acquire the power to differentiate between right and

wrong. "O how eager am I to reach that goal!" another great Indian Saint cries out. "How eager am I to listen to that Voice! Yet hundreds of other voices are ceaselessly filling my ears and preventing me from hearing that One Voice which I so long to hear!"

Until man can grow quiet, stilling all the restlessness which is being manifested constantly through his body, mind and mouth, he cannot hope to hear the Voice or gain the Divine Vision. Only by physical and mental discipline can he attain that state of tranquillity in which everything is seen in its true color. So long as he has not reached this state he cannot help being deceived again and again by ignorance. Ignorance is the greatest drawback in our path. And what is this ignorance? It is the cause of all our bondage and miseries. But what is its nature? Pantanjali, author of the Yoga Aphorisms, describes it as "taking the non-eternal for the eternal, the impure for the pure, what is really painful for happiness". That is, when we take things in the wrong sense or call them by wrong names, that is ignorance. Sankara uses the illustration that it is like mistaking a snake for a rope, or a rope for a snake. But such an error cannot alter the real character of any object. The false fear created in our mind by it vanishes when the light discloses its true nature. Before we have seen that, however, we tremble and suffer. So must it always be so long as we remain in ignorance and do not perceive the true nature of things; or so long as we imagine that this Self, which is pure and untainted by the sins and sorrows of this world, is something which is subject to change and easily destroyed.

Constant identification of ourselves with wrong things, we see therefore, is ignorance; and when we analyze, we find that we are perpetually identifying ourselves, not with

the unimperishable in us, but with all that is non-eternal. We regard this body as a real part of us. We depend on possessions, worldly power and pleasure, on things which are fleeting, treating them as if they were eternal; and when they drop away from us, it causes us pain. As long as man is not able to see things as they are, he can never be free from such pain-bearing obstructions. To free himself from this false perception he must practise self-discipline or *Tapasia.* Physical discipline purifies the body so that it ceases to be a weight on the mind. The body changes its nature and becomes suitable for spiritual illumination. Through the practice of mental discipline, the mind which is now always running downward, thinking of small ends, attaching itself to changeable things, will become lighter; and this lightness of body and mind means freedom.

That is the aim of all *Tapasia,* or mortification. The sooner we can destroy the heaviness of body and mind through study, through discipline, through the various methods of Yoga, the more quickly we shall acquire the power to reflect and distinguish right from wrong; the sooner also shall we be able to accept and follow what is right. We shall not be deceived then by that which is non-eternal, or by that which is impure; for we shall be able to identify ourselves with the True Self, with that part of our nature which is eternal and not bound by the modifications of ignorance. The Bhagavad-Gita thus describes the different disciplines or austerities which bring us to this state:

"Worship, service of Spiritual Teachers and wise men, practice of purity, simplicity, continence and non-injury: these are called austerities of the body.

"Speech which causes no pain to others and is true as well as pleasant and beneficial, regular study of the Scriptures: these are called austerities of speech.

"Cheerfulness of mind, kindliness, silence, self-control, purity of heart: these are called austerities of the mind."

Another product of ignorance is the identification of the Seer with the instrument of seeing. Whenever an impulse comes in our heart, we feel that we are that impulse, whether it be happy or unhappy. In the same way we identify ourselves with the different states of our mind and body; and so we come to believe that we are puny mortals, subject to death and misery. When the Seer and the instrument of seeing become wholly identified and inseparable, that brings the idea of ego. As a rule we are very much bound by this ego, and that is why we find no tranquillity; for peace can never come so long as we confound our real nature with all these egotistical notions. In our waking, dreaming and sleeping, these bind us and retard our spiritual growth. Therefore we must constantly try to exercise our faculty of discrimination and distinguish between what is real and what is not real. We should not be bound even by the pleasures which we are promised after this life. The ego which strives perpetually to enslave us through material objects should be overcome by the light of wisdom.

The distinction between ego and the Self is very great. The Real Self of man is always blissful, ever-existent, all-knowing and ever free. When man identifies himself with this little cage of flesh and loses the vision of his Self —because instead of looking within, he looks without where things are complex and scattered—he continues to gather experience in the realm of duality only and he feels himself lost. The man who has become thus scattered should open that third eye of his inner being and see for himself his true nature, for delusion can never be destroyed by mere theories or intellectual speculation. You may ask: Why should we

trouble to know about this Self if we are immortal and cannot be destroyed? Quite true, but the ignorant man must inevitably go through the agony of grief, death and separation as long as he clings to this body and looks upon it as his real self. When knowledge comes, however, and the inner spiritual eye opens, then he is able to penetrate to the depth of his being and see that Undying, Undecaying Self, which is mightier than all the instruments we possess; mightier than seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting; greater even than the powers of mind and intellect.

There is a story told in one of the Upanishads that the senses strove together as to which was the most important. Sight said: "If I did not exist, mortals would not be able to accomplish anything"; but hearing claimed that it was he who gave greater knowledge. In the same way the senses of smelling, tasting and touching declared that they were the most vital factors in human life. Then *Prana,* the Life-Force, the Self, the Abiding Inner Spirit withdrew; the senses at once became powerless and thus they realized that not by them did any mortal live or act. Man lives by the Self alone; how foolish it is then to identify ourselves merely with these external instruments and forget the One who uses them. If we would rid ourselves of this error, we must go into our own being and seek subtler and subtler forces, until we find the subtlest, the most powerful of all, that One who is not dependent on anything but on Whom all things are dependent.

When man is able to find his union with that Spirit, he does not grieve. He does not feel anger. He is never miserable. Nor is he ever carried away by the thought of pleasure, for his notion of existence is not based on material conditions. Such a soul is ever free, ever happy. And this happiness does not rest on praise or blame, heat or

cold, honor or dishonor; because all are alike to him. He has found a permanent basis of life. This is what is meant by union with the True Self or God. The little ego, which always deceives us, drops; and the Great Self shines forth and destroys all limitation. In Its light no deception can exist, for all things are shown as they are.

Ignorance, egotism, attachment, aversion: these are the pain-bearing obstructions, according to Patanjali. Attachment is that which dwells on pleasure. We like whatever gives us pleasure and we want to run away from whatever creates pain. We cling to the pleasant and try to avoid the painful; thus attachment and aversion both become a bondage and both arise from ignorance. Nor can we have one without the other. If we feel attachment, we cannot help feeling aversion; for like and dislike, pleasure and pain, darkness and light go together. They are the modifications produced from ignorance, from duality, from matter; but the Spirit is not bound by any of these. When through earnest striving, through purification of our vision and through concentration, we cease to depend for our knowledge and happiness on that which is at the surface of our being and begin to penetrate to the innermost depths, we find another channel open to satisfy us.

The man who refuses to listen to any other voice than that which speaks from those inner depths is never alone. When we overcome all dependence on human aid, then the Divine Voice speaks in our heart. It has been speaking to us always, but our ears have been turned outward, so we have not been able to hear or locate it. Also as long as our eyes remain distracted by the external world we shall not perceive that Subtle Being who abides within. To see or hear Him, there must be silence. You may say: "How can we practise silence in the noisy places where we live?

There are ceaseless distractions. The outside world is constantly disturbing us." But the stillness which we need is not dependent on external conditions. Until we have silenced our own mind and uncontrolled nature, if we should retire into the deepest recesses of the jungle, we should still find no solitude or quietness. What we need is to draw within ourselves in the midst of external noises. We must learn to turn our mind inward even on a crowded street.

Our mind can never be bound by any external thing unless we permit it to be. Once a pious man was being persecuted by a tyrannical ruler, who said to him: "Now what will you do? You cannot have your way because we have bound you fast. Will you not then obey my command?" The man replied: "You may bind my hands and feet, but you cannot bind my mind or heart. They are mine and I give them freely to God." So it is with us. The bondage we feel is not so much from the outside, for that has very little power over us. External objects exist alike for the saint and the sinner. One takes the object within himself, forms an attachment for it, and thus through his ignorance creates bondage; the other moves about freely and enjoys life as one should enjoy it; for all enjoyment comes from freedom and freedom cannot be attained until we have broken the fetters of ignorance.

All the pain-bearing obstructions which rise in our lives spring from ignorance, out of which are born attachment, aversion and the clinging to life in this body. Through discipline of body and mind and complete surrender to God, however, a man can escape from these. Every time he says "Not I, not I!" he weakens the chain of ego which binds him. Therefore while the ignorant man constantly says " I, I", the wise man repeats "Not I, not I". When the sense of ego is identified with this flesh and we cling to that, it

creates bondage; when, on the contrary, the sense of ego becomes identified with the Pure Essence of our being, it diminishes our bondage. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that this ego is very difficult to conquer, because it takes so many subtle forms to deceive us. It is like an onion: we peel off the outside husk and then we go on peeling and peeling, but we never seem to find a place to stop. Similarly we take off the ego from the body and it begins to manifest in the mind or the intellect, and we think we are very intelligent or very learned. Then it takes the subtle form of "I am more spiritual than others". Often people who devote themselves to higher study and contemplation come to feel themselves superior to every one and thus the ego deludes them once more. We must be very watchful therefore and guard ourselves against this enemy who is ever trying to deceive us.

"If this ego is so difficult to conquer", the devotee says, "then let it remain as a servant of God, or a child of God, as anything that will enable me to identify myself with the Pure Essence of my being instead of with the body and with physical conditions." This is one of the ways by which we can throw off this sense of "I". Instead of attaching ourselves to the little things of this world, to little powers, little pleasures, little joys, which are so changing and unsatisfactory, let us lift the ego and try to identify it with the True Self within. Thus shall we get rid of the bondage of ignorance and enjoy perfect freedom.

If we liberate our hearts from petty selfishness, wish no ill to others, and become clear as a crystal reflecting the light of Truth, what a radiant picture will appear in us mirroring things as they are, without the admixture of burning desires, without the distortion of erroneous illusion, without the agitation of sinful unrest.

—*Gautama Buddha.*

THE WISE MAN.

From the Teachings of Chuang-Tzu.

It was the time of autumn floods. Every stream poured into the river, which swelled in its turbid course. The banks receded so far that from one to the other it was impossible to tell a cow from a horse. Then the Spirit of the River laughed for joy that all the beauty of the earth had been gathered to himself. Down the stream he journeyed until he reached the ocean. Then looking out towards the East and seeing no limit to its waters, his countenance changed. As he gazed on the boundless expanse, he sighed and said to the Spirit of the Ocean: "A vulgar proverb says that he who has heard but part of the truth thinks no one equal to himself. Such a one am I. Now that I have looked upon your inexhaustibility—alas for me had I not reached your abode! I should have been the laughing-stock of those who possess comprehensive enlightenment."

To this the Spirit of the Ocean replied: "You cannot speak of the ocean to a well-frog—the creature of a narrow sphere. You cannot speak of ice to a summer insect—the creature of a season. You cannot speak of Tao (the Way) to a pedagogue—his vision is too restricted. But now that you have emerged from your narrow sphere and have seen the great ocean, you realize your own insignificance and I can speak to you of great principles.

"There is no body of water beneath the canopy of heaven which is greater than the ocean. All streams pour into it without ceasing, yet it does not overflow. It is constantly being drained off, yet it is never empty. Spring and autumn bring no change; floods and droughts are equally unknown. Thus it is immeasurably superior to mere rivers and brooks; though I would not venture to boast on this ac-

count, for I get my shape from the universe, my vital power from the *Yin* and *Yang* (the positive and negative principles of Nature). In the universe I am but as a small stone or a small tree on a vast mountain. And conscious thus of my own insignificance, what is there of which I can boast?

"The Four Seas—are they not to the universe but like puddles in a marsh? Of all the myriad created things, man is but one. And of all those who inhabit the land, live on the fruit of the earth and move about in cart or boat, an individual man is but one. Is not he, compared with all creation, but as the tip of a hair upon a horse's skin?"

"Am I then to regard the universe as great and the tip of a hair as small?" asked the Spirit of the River.

"Not at all," answered the Spirit of the Ocean. "Dimensions are limitless; time is endless. Conditions are not invariable; periods of time are not final. Thus the wise man looks into space and does not regard the small as too little, nor the great as too much; for he knows that there is no limit to dimensions. He looks back into the past and does not grieve over what is far off, nor rejoice over what is near, for he knows that time is without end. He investigates fullness and decay and does not rejoice if he succeeds, nor lament if he fails; for he knows that conditions are variable. He who clearly apprehends the scheme of existence does not rejoice over life, nor repine over death; for he knows that no period of time is final.

"The truly great man, although he does not injure others, never credits himself with charity or mercy. He seeks not gain, but does not despise his fellows who do. He struggles not for wealth, but does not take credit for letting it alone. He asks help of no man, but takes no credit for his self-reliance; neither does he despise those who seek

preferment through friends. He acts differently from the vulgar crowd, but takes no credit for his exceptional behavior; nor because others act with the majority does he despise them as hypocrites. The ranks and emoluments of the world are to him no cause for joy; its punishments and shame no cause for disgrace. I have heard it said, the man of Tao has no reputation; perfect virtue acquires nothing; the truly great man ignores self;—this is the height of self-discipline.

"The man of perfect virtue cannot be burned by fire, nor drowned by water, nor hurt by frost or sun, nor torn by wild bird or beast. Not that he makes light of these, but he discriminates between safety and danger. Happy under prosperous and adverse circumstances alike, cautious as to what he discards and what he accepts:—nothing can harm him.

SPIRITUALITY

Adapted from the Brahmavadin.

Can we call a man spiritual merely because he has a belief in God? By no means, for in many cases this belief has been early implanted in us by a pious parent and is nothing more than an instinctive faith riveted in the mind by an association of long duration. In other and higher forms it is found to be only a reasoned intellectual conviction based on study and inference. The Vedanta has never set a high value on this kind of purely intellectual or speculative belief. In fact, it makes no very serious distinction between the man who in this manner believes in God and the man who does not believe at all. "Religion is realization", says Swami Vivekananda. It is not a mere theoretical conviction. It may even be permissible to have no faith whatever in any special form of religion and yet be

spiritual. Sankara truly says: "Option is possible as to whether a substance is to be thus or thus. All option depends on the notions of a man; but the knowledge of the real nature of a thing does not depend on the notions of a man but only on the thing itself."

The holding of some notion regarding God is no guarantee of knowledge of Him or even of a proper attitude towards Him. There are many whom the world has considered and revered as spiritual men, who had not this belief in God as we usually understand it. The great Rishi Kapila, recognized in India as a Divine Manifestation, held that the universe could be accounted for without a God and in that sense he might be classified as a non-believer. The same holds true of the Sakyamuni. In Western lands people like George Eliot, Comte, Rousseau, or even some of our earnest scientific investigators, who devoted all the resources of their speculation or active energies to the relief and advancement of struggling humanity and whose passionate longings after a higher social ideal have burnt into our hearts: even they have often been regarded as deeply religious and even spiritual, though undoubtedly they had many enemies who looked upon them in quite a different light.

Nor is it permissible to take spirituality to mean a vague, indefinable aspiration after some ideal; or the mere kindling of man's emotional susceptibilities in favor of some noble cause. Certainly we shall not be justified in ascribing spirituality to those men who show spasmodic emotions in favor of human freedom or social reform, but who have no solid foundation of knowledge or practice beneath their feverish efforts. On the other hand men like Emerson or Renan or Tennyson, who possess the dual gift of a deep-feeling heart with strong intellectual insight, must be re-

garded as spiritual personalities.

The careful observance of religious form again does not imply spirituality. The masses of the people who are ready not only to bow credulously before any superstition or dogma, but even to sacrifice their possessions and life itself for the sake of their belief, cannot for that reason be said to possess that which constitutes the essence of spirituality in man's nature. Yet the Vedanta does not fail to glorify all forms of sacrifice and religious practice. The value of ritualistic observances has been accepted by every religion, and Vedanta fully appreciates the importance of these outer observances in the onward march of the Soul. As means of purification they lead to spirituality, but are not evidences of it.

What then is spirituality? The first of its constituent elements is the feeling that we are by our inherent nature superior to the deluding and fleeting physical world around us. The second element is an intense deep-rooted desire for release from the bondage of our lower self. The mind gives such easy theoretical assent to both these statements that they seem well-nigh platitudes. Yet how many are living them out in their daily life? "Miserable are they", the Neo-Platonist Hierocles exclaims, "because they see not and hear not the good that is nigh them; and the way of escape from evil, few there be that understand it." How rare indeed are they who, even after having their minds enlightened as to their relation to the Infinite Intelligence, Power and Bliss, are capable or desirous of rising to the supreme grandeur of the higher planes of existence? How many strive to show forth the essential elevation of their true nature as spirit? Even the more thoughtful among us are too often wilfully blind to the Truth we clearly perceive. We are easily unsettled by the conflicting experiences of the world

and waver to and fro; or we toss about on an ocean of doubt and perplexity, until our lucid intervals are rare and these fitful flashes fail to make any marked impression on our activities or aspirations.

Frequently also we become absorbed in the humdrum routine of daily toil for bread and butter and allow the higher light to die out. So long, however, as we are not animated by an earnest longing to rise out of our lower nature to a higher plane of existence, we must inevitably give way to anger, pride, vulgar self-assertion, to all those states of mind which humiliate and discourage us. We are at every moment in danger of being overpowered by the cravings of the brute in us. We have no purpose in life; we discover no law in Nature; we waste and fritter away our energies; and all the time we are puffed up with false pride even when we are living like slaves, cowed by ignoble passion and lust of the flesh.

But the man who realizes that he has a higher nature and a higher destiny, and who is burning with the desire for emancipation from his lower nature, what course does he take to protect himself from his own weakness and avoid any lapse or falling back into his brute habits? This question leads us to the third and last element of spirituality. Conscious of his own weakness, he seeks out an Ideal that conforms to his need and makes an unreserved surrender of his mind and heart to It. It is this act of absolute self-surrender to the Ideal which sets the seal on his spiritual nature and guarantees his elevation to the highest altitudes of self-conquest and self-realization. If he can find this Ideal in embodied form, his chances of rapid unfoldment, according to Sankara, are greatly increased. There is nothing like the contact of Soul with Soul to inspire men to noble deeds and heroic activities, to raise what in them is low and

illuminate what is dark. As Socrates declares in Plato's Republic: "I can but suffer the penalty of ignorance; and that penalty is, to be taught by those who know." Few are they who realize the profound need of superior guidance and enlightenment as a preparation for life. Often the crisis arrives before we awaken to the need and then we fall. Trials and tribulations abound in the world; temptations innumerable beset us along our path; and too often we fail to comprehend that there are great ones on earth whose benign hearts and sympathetic understanding can bring to us the inspiration we need and help us in our struggle towards the realms of eternal light.

According to Vedanta, whether this surrender of the human mind and will is to an ideal principle or to an ideal teacher matters not, for there is no real distinction. The teacher is regarded as ideal not for his personal sake, but for the principle he represents and exemplifies in himself. To the followers of personal religions this is unintelligible, for these religions are so closely bound up with the personality of their founders, that the founder becomes all-important and the principles which he represents often sink into comparative insignificance. But this is a great disadvantage, especially in an age of accurate historical inquiry like the present. When the recorded facts regarding the founder of any personal religion fail to satisfy the demands of scientific scrutiny, he is treated as legendary; this weakens the influence of his teaching, and the loss to human society is deplorable. But impersonal religions, or religions of principle, take their stand solely upon the spiritual truths they inculcate; and while insisting upon the utmost reverence and surrender of heart to the Great Teachers who have worked for the spiritual elevation of humanity, they are in no danger from scientific scrutiny, because its rigorous

methods are powerless to strike at their foundations.

Actually, however, the ideal principle and the ideal master in whose life the principle is illustrated are not to be looked upon as separate or separable; yet inasmuch as it is conceded in all training that example is better than precept, practice more potent than theory, the surrender to the personal teacher seems normally to precede the surrender to the abstract principle. As, however, through humble service and submission the disciple gradually purifies his nature and subdues his ego, he passes unconsciously and spontaneously up from the plane of personality to the plane of principle. To use the words of Robert Browning:

"And thus looking within and around me, I ever renew,
With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it, too,
The submission of Man's nothing — perfect to God's All-complete,
As by each new obeisance in spirit I climb to His feet."

This "obeisance in spirit" is the crowning element in all higher attainment. Through it the sense of I-ness is worn off and the real nature of man stands revealed. The lower self is not destroyed, it is merely swallowed up in the brighter light of the Higher Self, as stars in the sunshine. When this is accomplished, mind and flesh become willing servants to the Soul and the state of pure spirituality is realized.

REPORTS.

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston the two Sunday Services and the Tuesday Evening Class continued without interruption during the summer and the attendance remained excellent throughout. All the meetings were conducted by Swami Paramananda until the 17th of July, after which they were left in charge of Sister Devamata. The Swami started for Los Angeles on the 19th and immediately on his arrival resumed the Sunday Service and bi-weekly Classes

at the Centre there. Later he began two series of public lectures, on Tuesday and Sunday Evenings, which aroused such growing interest and appreciation that when the first courses were completed he was persuaded to extend them for another six weeks. Some of the subjects of his lectures have been: "Yoga," "Universality of Vedanta," "Sin and Salvation," "Occultism and Mysticism," "Right Discrimination." On the 19th, 20th, and 21st of September he lectured in San Diego, under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, on "Spiritual Idealism of the Vedas," "Concentration and Illumination," "Meditation and Superconsciousness." He also spoke during the same week at the Metaphysical Library of Los Angeles. It is not known just when the Swami will leave the West; but it is probable that he will accept an invitation to deliver some lectures in Seattle before returning to Boston.

We were glad to hear from Geneva that the faithful group of students there would begin their weekly meetings on the first of this month. Ever since the Swami's last visit to Switzerland in 1914 they have met together regularly during the winter season, reading and doing their utmost to foster the work begun by him—awaiting eagerly his return at the close of the war.

Two useful booklets have just been published by the Vedanta Centre of Boston, under the titles "The Problem of Life and Death" and "Concentration and Illumination." They consist of lectures by Swami Paramananda which appeared originally in The Message of the East, but which thus brought together in consecutive form acquire new force and significance. In the first the subjects treated are "Life and Death", "Can Destiny be Overcome?", "Reincarnation and Evolution" and "Resurrection and Immortality". In the second the chapter headings are "Concentration and Illumination", "Meditation" and "Aids to Meditation."

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE EAST.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

If God is the common origin of all living beings, what causes the differences we see among nations and races and men? Does He bestow on some greater blessings than on others? In the Bhagavad-Gita the Lord says: "Alike am I to all beings, hated or beloved is there none to Me"; that is, He loves all His children equally, He is never partial. It is because our wisdom is covered over by ignorance that we are deluded and imagine that God wills to bestow more on one than on another. It is we ourselves who create these differences. As a worldly father brings many gifts and lays them before his children and lets each child choose according to his inclination, so the Supreme Father of the universe has an endless variety of gifts for us. He lays the whole world before us — the world of thought and the world of physical attractions — and we, His children, are allowed to choose whatever we want. But we must naturally reap the result of our choice; for every act, every condition, brings its result, which we cannot avoid however we may try.

It is this difference in the choice of gifts from the Almighty God which distinguishes the East from the West. From time immemorial the East has chosen the spiritual

life; and the West, so history tells us, has chosen the other path. As a result of her choice the East has produced many spiritual giants and has always exercised a strong religious influence on the world; while the West has set in motion great material forces and made discoveries which have been helpful on the external plane. It is not a mere matter of accident that we find all the great Spiritual Teachers born in the East. The word "East" indeed has become symbolic of wisdom:—"the wisdom of the East", "the wise men of the East". Even the sun which saves the world from outer darkness rises in the East. The world of the inner life has a greater reality to the Oriental than to the Occidental; and wherever we devote our energies, there we are sure to discover that which will satisfy the desires of our heart. So East and West, in parrallel lines, have evolved practical methods by which to gain their different ends. A casual Occidental observer, going to the East, looks upon the Oriental as a dreamer, because his thought dwells on the Unseen and he sets little value on the comforts of this life. An Oriental, on the other hand, who has devoted his whole soul to fathom the mysteries of that Unseen Realm, smiles as he sees grown-up people in the West playing with worldly things of only momentary worth. Yet both are travelling to the same ultimate goal and both are born of the same Father, who provides all this diversity of choice in order that His children may grow and find their real nature.

The difference, however, is not so great as we might think; it is only a difference in degree. The Oriental desires that which is more lasting and the Occidental still cherishes that which is fleeting; but these fleeting things may also help to educate the Soul-consciousness. It is unjust, however, to look upon the East as less practical than

the West. The Orientals are not visionary in spiritual matters. In the West, whenever any new teaching is brought, at once the question is asked: What is its practical utility? Will it bring success or some tangible benefit on this plane? And if it does not offer an immediate result here, it is rejected. In the East, on the contrary, they ask: Is it a practical method by which to obtain spiritual consciousness? If so, the Oriental will plunge into it. No matter what the sacrifice, he is ready to make it. This longing to penetrate to the depths of being has given to the children of the East the power to discover the reality of the Unseen. From the very outset of religious search they have tried to make God a reality. That Unseen Realm—to many a mere speculation, an abstract Ideal, which can never be seen by these eyes—the East believes in; not only believes in, but sits down quietly and strives to see. And that is what gives her so much power on the plane of Spirit.

On the physical plane the West has achieved marvellous things. But is that all we need to complete life? We need something also for our Soul, and until that greater part of our being is satisfied, no fleeting outer satisfaction can enable us to reach completeness. We must not look with one eye only on this world; we must have both eyes wide open if we wish to get a full vision. If we close the spiritual eye and see only a partial external existence, we miss something which is most vital. The East has cultivated above all Soul-vision. It has found a practical method by which everyone may develop his full power of sight and see for himself if there is a Reality, or if that Unseen is merely an intellectual speculation.

What we need today is balance. It is not that the West should give up her Ideal or her effort at accomplishment on the physical plane, but she should at the same time strive

to make real the spirit of Christ, for religion does not mean merely accepting a name. It means being and becoming, manifesting Reality. The watchword of the East is "Know thy Self. Know God, for He is thy true Reality; and knowing Him, thou shalt know all things." Having firm faith in this, the people of the Orient find it easy to renounce; but this spirit of renunciation which exists naturally in the East is shunned by the West. Why should it be so? Renunciation does not mean tearing our hearts to pieces; it means distinguishing between the real and the unreal, the vital and the not-vital, and choosing that which is vital and real. It means refusing to compromise between religion and worldly desires. There is too much compromise in the practice of Christ's religion in the West today. As we study the lives of His followers, do we see His spirit manifest in all their actions? Is not the Christ they follow rather one they have created, an Occidental Christ?

The well known clergyman, Rev. Heber Newton, writes: "Christianity has seen Christ, not as He really was, but as He has appeared to its eyes. Our Western eyes have seen Him westernized, distorted in the lenses of Grecian speculation, of Roman institutionalism, of Mediaeval scholasticism. How greviously the image of Jesus has suffered in this transference, scholars know right well. The image of Jesus which the Christian Church has framed in its theologies is far from a counterpart of the original and real Jesus; so far that were most Christians carried back into the age when He was upon earth and set down in His own Galilee, He might pass them never known or recognized. How can we ever get back to that far-off age and see Him as He was? Simply by getting over into the position of those who today reproduce the life and spirit of His day.

In the East, time is not. Today is as yesterday, and our century as eighteen centuries earlier. As the East now reads Him, coming to Him in a free and natural manner—that we may be sure is the nearest approach which we can get to a true image of Him. For Jesus was an Oriental, and only by the Orientals can He be interpreted."

When people are able to go to the source and recognize Christ as He was, then there will be no difference between the religious Ideals of West and East. There will never cease to be a difference between forms and forms. We shall always see differences when we look upon this universe from the point of view of diversity, but an underlying unity is there. A thread runs through and connects all souls, the thread of spiritual consciousness; when we touch that we find unity. Therefore we must try to go deep into our being. We must strive to realize the true significance of religion. It is not that we should change our Ideal, for there is no difference between one Ideal and another when properly apprehended; but if we sacrifice the Ideal to follow our own fleshly desires, then we shall never be able to find a common ground on which to meet. Diversity in races, in modes of living, will always exist; but there is little difference in Soul-consciousness, for its leads men to the heights where all things are one. It is on this basis alone that we can realize oneness, never on the physical plane, and it is here that we must try to establish it. If we are willing to give up this spirit of compromise between our religious Ideal and our physical desires, then we shall find that no matter what we do, we shall be moving towards the ultimate goal of unity.

The East has always been brave in her search for spiritual truths. "Seek ye first the kingdom of Heaven"—that is the voice of the East. And whatever we want, God

grants it. He has given spiritual blessing to the children of the East because that is what they longed for. When that same hungering will come in the heart of the West, she will also be filled with spiritual blessing. The plan of creation is not to destroy anything. We need certain things for our physical well-being, no doubt; but the purpose of human existence is not merely to live happily in this world. We must also seek for that which can satisfy the demand of our inner nature. When we can harmonize these two, we have indeed solved the problem of life. In the East whatever they do, eating, drinking, sleeping, it is made a religious act. Why should it not be so? Why should religion be apart from the ordinary life? Is God apart from us? He abides in the heart of all living beings; but those who do not recognize this, go round and round as if mounted on a wheel. They try to find happiness elsewhere, whereas the very source of their happiness is within themselves; and finding that storehouse of wisdom will satisfy them not only here but hereafter. Knowing this the East has never been willing to sacrifice her spiritual life. It is because of this she has gained spiritual treasure and this treasure she is ready to share with the West.

But the West also has something to give the East, for East and West are two parts of the same universe. When all the children of God will learn to work in harmony; when East and West will be willing to exchange Ideals, not with any feeling of exclusion, then there will come a greater vision; sympathy, tolerance and mutual understanding will prevail and we shall attain a truer state of civilization. Today we realize many things that we did not realize years ago, because material progress enables man to come in contact with others, nothing can be hidden from him. What we experience in this way also has its value; for as

we go on expanding in knowledge of the external universe, we move towards knowledge of Ultimate Being; only it is a slow process. Physical science offers us knowledge, but its method takes endless time; for we have to study every atom, every form of existence before we can arrive at a final conclusion; and no matter how much time we spend, we can always find something more to know. In the East they take the more direct course. They try to find the very Essence of creation, to gain a knowledge of their relationship with God; and by this method they arrive at a perception of unity in the midst of diversity. This unity is what the world is waiting to realize, but it is not to be found in the external universe. We must try, therefore, to find it within; to realize that God is a reality, and that we are all children of that one Father, whether we live in the East or West; that the fictitious barriers we create of caste, creed, race and nationality do not exist in His eyes, for He is the Father of the whole universe. This breadth of vision we can never gain except through spiritual culture. We must learn to open another eye, an eye that has not been developed in the majority of human beings,—the eye of the Soul. And that eye can only be opened through the spiritual life. Religion does not call upon us to give up this life, but it asks us that in all our thoughts, words and actions we cultivate the sense of the nearness of God; for without Him we are lonely, without Him we are helpless, while with Him we have all things. It is this which the East gives to the world,—a vivid sense of the presence of the Unseen. It holds out the hopeful promise that we can all prove for ourselves the reality of God and our oneness with Him. Knowing this we shall see that all are His children; then disharmony and every feeling of difference will vanish and we shall realize the universal ideal of brotherhood.

THE GLORY OF TRUTH.

From the Teachings of Lord Buddha.

The Truth is not arbitrary or a matter of opinion, but can be investigated, and he who earnestly searches for the Truth will find it.

The Truth is hidden to the blind, but he who has the mental eye sees the Truth. The Truth will remain the ultimate standard by which we can discern false and true doctrines.

Let us, then, revere the Truth; let us inquire into the Truth and state it, and let us obey the Truth. He whose spiritual eye is open will discover it.

The throne of Truth is righteousness; and love and justice and good-will are its ornaments.

Righteousness is the place in which Truth dwells, and here in the souls of mankind aspiring after the realization of righteousness there is ample space for a rich and ever richer revelation of the Truth.

Truth is the end and aim of all existence, and the worlds originate so that Truth may come and dwell therein.

Those who fail to aspire for the Truth have missed the purpose of life.

Blessed is he who rests in the Truth, for all things will pass away, but Truth abideth forever.

Errors can be fashioned as it pleases those who cherish them; therefore they are pleasant to look upon, but they are unstable and contain the seeds of dissolution.

Truth cannot be fashioned. Truth is one and the same; it is immutable.

Truth is above the power of death, it is omnipresent, eternal, and most glorious.

The nature of delusions and errors and lies is death; and sin is the way to perdition.

Delusions, errors, and lies are like huge gaudy vessels, the rafters of which are rotten and worm-eaten, and those who embark in them are fated to be shipwrecked.

Yet does all life yearn for the Truth and the Truth only can cure our diseases and give peace to our unrest. Truth is the essence of life, for Truth endureth beyond the end of the body. Truth is eternal and will still remain even though heaven and earth shall pass away.

There are not many truths in the world, for Truth is one and the same at all times and in every place.

FOREST SCHOOLS OF ANCIENT INDIA.

By Sister Devamata.

The natural university of the early Indo-Aryans was the forest. No college campus or cathedral close could offer so still a retreat as was to be found under the high-arching trees of the jungle beside some cool-flowing stream. It was Nature's own cloister made for the student. And here the teacher lived in humble retirement, accepting the pupils who came to him as his own; clothing them, feeding them, caring for them like sons, and sharing with them whatever of plenty or privation was his. Even the richest were not allowed to pay for their tuition: to impart knowledge as a means of livelihood was regarded in those days as a dishonor, unfitting the teacher for his task. Did not Truth belong to God, how could it be sold by man? Every child was taken as a sacred charge. Nor did it matter whether few came or many. The schoolroom with its carpet of soft moss and roof of over-lapping branches was elastic and could be stretched to any limit. There were also bamboo poles and palm leaves in plenty for the walls and thatch of a new dormitory.

To this secluded woodland college the father brought his boys at the age of eight or ten and surrendered them without reserve to the guidance of the teacher. During the years of schooling there must be no conflict of authority, no counteracting influences. As home and parents had possessed the toddling child, giving him his first lessons by sacred song and story; now at the outset of a new period the boy must be carried into a specialized environment, to live beside one whose whole thought was consecrated to the pursuit of knowledge and whose earnest exalted life was the chief text-book spread open before the scholar's awakening mind. The nursery time was over and the moment come for the graver duties of *Brahmacharya*,—service and study. These two factors were given equal place in the daily routine; although, if anything, service received the greater emphasis, as it did in the system of apprenticeship during the Middle Ages. Those wise men of the forest knew that only he who can make himself a servant is ready to receive so great a thing as Truth.

We read in the Chandogya-Upanishad that when Satyakama came to a sage begging for instruction, he was given four hundred lean cows and told to drive them to a distant pasture and keep them until the drove had multiplied to a thousand. Evidently the deep-seeing eyes of the master discerned that the boy's heart was ripe for solitude and contemplation, hence there could be no better preparatory training than that which would be gained on the high stretches of a lonely mountainside. And so truly did experience bear out his judgment that when at last the patient student, his task accomplished, returned once more to the hermitage, the master greeted him with the words: "Friend, your face shines like one who knows the Truth." Education, as those ancient teachers conceived it, meant

primarily a process of purification, a removal of that within which barred the way of knowledge inherent in every human being; and this was most quickly achieved by the lowlier activities of the common life. Also in this way a more familiar relation was established and it was believed that the lessons learned through close personal contact between teacher and pupil were of greater value than those taught during class hours—just as more of birds can be learned by one walk through the woods with an ornithologist than in many recitations behind four walls.

Nor was the feminine element lacking in those woodland cloisters; for nearly every forest school had its mother, and the dripping vessel of cold water from the lake or the fagots of wood from the jungle were as often for her needs beside the hearth as for the sacrificial rites of the master before the altar. Now and then, too, her softer heart would plead against the stern discipline of her husband. Thus was it in the house of Satyakama Gabala, after he had become a teacher. When a certain student, Upakosala, had dwelt with him for twelve years patiently serving, his wife made appeal to the master: "This boy is quite exhausted with service. He has carefully tended your fires. Let not the fires themselves blame you, but teach him." Yet Satyakama went away on a journey without having taught him and the boy from sheer grieving could not eat. Then the wife approached him with tender concern, saying: "Student, eat! Why do you not eat?" And the boy replied: "I am full of sorrows and shall take no food." The record makes no further mention of her, but it is evident that she revived his drooping spirits; for soon he returned to his service and out of the fire, which he had so faithfully tended, he heard a voice revealing the knowledge which the master had withheld—perhaps because this

final test was necessary to prepare the pupil to grasp it.

The courses of study in these schools were not unlike those followed in the nascent mediaeval universities of the Occident,—a classic instruction with a dominant background of religion. But while in the West religion during that scholastic period was theological and verbose, in Vedic India it tended away from dogma towards silent independent research. The method of imparting instruction also was not the dialectic method of mediaeval Europe, but rather the dialoguic method adopted later in Greece by Socrates and Plato. All branches of secular learning in the Indo-Aryan curriculum were classed as "lower knowledge", or the preparatory stage, while "higher knowledge" was defined as "that by which the Indestructible is apprehended". The chief aim of their study was to reach an ultimate generalization, because they saw that without an understanding of the Final Cause no explanation of the universe could be stable or conclusive. And the student should be so trained that he would be able to apprehend this for himself. Education which merely gave information about things was in their opinion superficial and incomplete. Learning, in other words, was not accepted as a substitute for direct vision. A father, for example, chides a son, who being asked "What is God?" replies with long passages from the Scriptures defining Deity. "That is enough," he says sternly. "You have evidently profitted little by your schooling."

Another youth after spending twelve years in the teacher's house returns home self-satisfied and "considering himself well-read." His father deals a telling blow at his pride by putting the question: "My son, since you are so conceited and think yourself so well-informed, have you ever asked for that instruction by which one hears what

cannot be heard, perceives what cannot be perceived, knows what cannot be known?" And the youth, humiliated, is forced to admit his ignorance. Also a book-wise Brahmin, who comes again and again to a court offering to teach the king, is told; "Go and learn." Each time, puzzled by the rebuff, he plunges deeper into his study, until at last the true meaning of knowledge bursts upon him and, grown humble, he stays at home. Then the King comes to seek him and asks to be taught of him.

In the Vedic system three distinct stages in the acquisition of knowledge were recognized:—hearing, reflection, and realization. The first was the period of theory; the second, of experiment and proof; the third, of definite knowledge. In the terms of an educational curriculum, these might be classed as the preparatory school, the college and the final specialized work of the university. The method employed in the last two was strictly empirical. Present day science is not more rigidly exacting in its demands that all statements rest on direct observation and experiment than were those ancient instructors. Thus when Svetaketu is being taught by his own father regarding the True, he is told to bring a fruit of the Nyagrodha tree and break it. "It is broken, Sir." "What do you see there?" "These seeds, almost infinitesimal." "Break one of them." "It is broken, Sir." "What do you see there?" "Not anything, Sir." Then the sage drives home the lesson: "My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive, of that very essence this great Nyagrodha tree exists. Out of this subtle essence springs all life. It is the True and thou art It." Then the youth craves to know more and he is told to put some salt in water and leave it until the morning. On the morrow the salt of course could not be seen and the father tells him to taste the water from the bottom, from the

surface, from the middle. "How is it?" he inquires. "It is salt everywhere." "Throw it away." The son does so and as the water dries up the salt lies, a white deposit, on the ground. Again a lesson: "Now also in this body, forsooth, you do not perceive the True, my son; but it is always there." Could there be a more vivid tangible demonstration of the reality of the unseen Soul or God?

Thus in the laboratory of nature did they study the hidden facts of life. But it may be objected that this does not bear the character of true scientific analysis. It is rather a moral lesson. So it seems to the Western mind; but to the Indo-Aryan there was no distinction between physical and metaphysical, moral and material. God and Soul were as much objects of empiric study, as were unknown substances in chemistry or the rock strata of geology. For them there was no limit to the area of exact science. It must reach to the very end of creation. And if they seemed often to proceed by inference and analogy, so also does the modern scientist when he frames a fresh hypothesis based on the observation of some new and unexplained operation in Nature. This stage, moreover, was wholly primary in their scheme of education and the student was not expected to stop until he had found an original demonstration for every theorem thus propounded. In the ancient writings we find it recorded that the master sometimes did no more than repeat the initial equation each time the pupil returned with an answer, and the student was thus led on and on until wholly by his own thought processes he reached an ultimate solution.

The man of science, however, must have instruments, it may be said. Yes, and those age-old teachers knew it as well as the instructors of today; but almost at the outset they made the valuable discovery that nature had pro-

vided every human being with an instrument of wider range and more delicate adjustment than any man could make with his own hands,—the instrument of the human mind; and the aim of all their instruction was to give their pupils a thorough command of this. Therefore the pupil was trained in concentration, meditation and intravision as today we are taught the use of microscope or telescope. Nor was this a mere idle subjective theory. There can be no doubt of its practical validity; for centuries before the Christian era we find these wise forest-masters teaching virtually all the axiomatic truths of modern science,—the equilibrium of forces, the indestructibility of matter, the uniformity of law, and the vital fact of evolution. Also they had a remarkable understanding of the human organism, its control and use. How did they discern these things? By studying Nature they discovered that the swifter and finer the vibration, the greater the penetrative force; and since focused thought was the swiftest and finest vibration known, it should be able to pierce the densest veil of matter. Working on this hypothesis, they soon discovered that creation was a loosely woven mesh, easily penetrated by the trained and subtle gaze. This makes plain why in their system of education such stress was layed on the rigid discipline of body, mind and senses, for these were the student's instruments and must be well-tempered.

In those ancient days there was no break in the course of study. The school merged automatically into the university. It was customary for the scholars to remain in their teacher's house for eight, ten or twelve years. At the expiration of that term the father came to take his sons, leaving a thank-offering had he wealth. But often it happened that among the sons some one showed such

aptitude for study that he remained longer with the teacher, and in the course of time he might even build his own bamboo hut and settle permanently in the jungle. Thus round the nucleus of a simple school-master's thatched cottage there grew up extended seats of learning. Often, too, scholars in advanced grades came. Thus only ripe and thoughtful minds could have formulated such questions as appear at the outset of one of the sacred records of the time: "Whence are we born, whereby do we live and whither do we go? Should time, or Nature, or necessity, or chance, or the elements be the cause, or He who is called the Supreme Person (the Personal God or the Creator)? Or is the Absolute the cause?" Also that more ancient pupil in the Rig-Veda must have passed beyond the primary grade when he begged to be taught "that, knowing which all else is known." In another record we read that Narada approached the venerable Sanatkumara and said: "Teach me, Sir." And Sanatkumara replied: "Please tell me what you already know; afterward I shall tell you what comes after." Narada then enumerates the studies he has completed: "I know the four Vedas, Grammar, the rules for certain sacrifices, the science of numbers, the science of portents and of time, logic, ethics, etymology, pronunciation, ceremonial and prosody, the science of weapons, astronomy, and the fine arts (the making of perfumes, dancing, singing, playing, etc.) But, Sir, with all this I know the Sacred Books only, I do not know the Self or Spirit within." And the master replies: "Whatever you have read is a name only."

This strikes the keynote of all ancient Indo-Aryan teaching. The knowledge of this world was by no means despised. On the contrary, nowhere was learning more eagerly cultivated; but the pupil was never allowed to forget

that without the illuminating flash of Soul-consciousness, all was but a dead letter, a lightless lantern. And his craving for the higher attainment was fired by such promises as this: "If you were to tell this truth to a dry stick, branches would grow and leaves spring from it." Or again: "If a man knows the underlying Truth of all things here, that is the true end of life. The wise who have thought on all things and discovered the Divine Essence in them, attains immortality." "He who knows Him who has no beginning and no end, in the midst of chaos, creating all things, having many forms, alone enveloping everything, is freed from all fetters." What wonder that, with such words of hope ringing in their ears, young men lingered year after year in some quiet retreat striving with heightening fervor to plunge deeper and deeper into the hidden recesses of knowledge? Thus the forests became populous with men — and women too — aflame with the desire to know that ultimate unit by knowing which all else would become plain. Sometimes they gathered into groups called hermitages, which grew to number many hundreds. Bodily needs were reduced to the simplest formula in order that the major portion of time and energy might be devoted to the quest of Truth. They married, but with the lofty aim of creating the best possible environment and conditions for enlightened souls to incarnate; and it is said that children were born among them with such aptitude for knowledge that even in tender years they attained superconscious vision.

Nor was their life over-grave and joyless. The note struck in a hymn of the Rig-Veda: — "Let the oxen work merrily, let the men work merrily, let the plough move on merrily, fasten the traces merrily," is characteristic of all true Vedic teaching. The West regards it as pessimistic

because it sets small value on those things which the Occident prizes, just as to a boy the grown-up who prefers a lonely walk to base-ball or cricket seems a misanthrope. But whoever takes delight in his task is an optimist, and no people ever found deeper delight in any labor than did the Indo-Aryan in his search after the Ultimate Reality. Could a dejected heart have given voice to that verse of the Vedas: "Out of joy the universe has come, in joy it lives and back to joy it goes"? In the scheme of life developed by the Aryans of India we find no conflict of ideals, no contradictions or inconsistencies. The home, the school and the temple all faced in the same direction. There was as natural an orientation in the performance of the homely tasks of the household as in the setting up of an altar, and no scholar ever began his schooling without bowing before the family shrine and invoking the blessings of the Most High. The final goal of all their effort was one, which may be summed up in the words spoken by a saintly teacher to a worthy pupil in the Chandogya-Upanishad: "The Infinite is bliss. There is no true bliss in anything finite. The Infinite alone is bliss. This Infinite, however, we must desire to understand."

The Gate was opened to me, that in one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together at an University. For I saw and knew the Being of all beings. And I saw and knew the whole working Essence in the Evil and the Good, and the origin and existence of each of them; and likewise how the fruitful bearing Womb of Eternity brought forth. .... I saw it as in a great Deep in the internal. For I had a thorough view of the Universe.

— *Jacob Boehme.*

MY GOD IS EVERYWHERE.

By Pattanattu Pillai.

(A South-Indian Poet of about the 10th Century)

If He be mine, what can I need?
My God is everywhere,
Within, beyond man's highest word,
My God abideth still.

In sacred books, in darkest night,
In deepest, bluest sky,
In those who know the truth, and in
The faithful few on earth;—

Where'er wind blows or compass points,
God's light doth stream and shine.
Yet see yon fool—beneath his arm
He bears the sacred roll.

How carefully he folds the page
And draws the closing string!
See how he binds the living book,
That not a leaf escape!

Ah, yes! the truth should fill his heart;
But 'tis beneath his arm.
To him who knows, the sun is high;
To this, 'tis starless night.

If knowledge be not thine, thou art
As one in deep midstream,
A stream so wide that both the banks
Are hidden from thine eyes.

THE ETHICAL IDEALS OF THE HINDUS.

Extract by Swami Saradananda.

In order to trace the gradual evolution of ethics, it is necessary that we should consider a little of the history of India. The one great peculiarity of India that the student of history finds, is that the Hindus never regarded anything as unnecessary, to be thrown away; they believe that man travels from truth to truth and not from error to truth. What is truth for one mind under some circumstances might not appear as truth when one arrives at a higher stage in the process of evolution; yet that apparent error helped him to come up to the higher truth, and there will be found minds which have arrived only at that point in the appreciation of truths. So the Hindus always preserved the lower truth which helped them to come up to the higher ones. For instance starting from dualism, when they discovered or evolved the higher truths of qualified monism and ultimately monism, they did not throw away dualism or qualified monism, but regarded them as stages in the process of development. They had no quarrel with them, for they knew that in order to come up to monism man must rise through the other two stages.

The first great positive fact that comes before us in the early history of India is that Vyasa, a great sage, divided and classified the Vedas into the four great divisions: the Rik, the Sama, the Yajus, and the Atharvan; and that he collected all the historical narratives up to that time and called them the Mahabharata, or the history of the great descendants of the King Bharata. This Vyasa was a contemporary of Sri Krishna, whom the Hindus regard as the greatest of all Divine Incarnations. It is difficult to determine the age of Vyasa and Krishna, but Hindu scholars are one in their opinion that the age of Krishna pre-

ceded the age Buddha; and that Rama, the hero of the great epic Ramayana, was born before Krishna. So the early history of India before the advent of Buddhism may be divided into these three great periods: — The earlier Vedic period, before the Vedas were classified; the period of the Ramayana, the age of Rama and Vasishtha; the period of the Mahabharata, the age of Krishna and Vyasa.

The first of these three periods must have covered many thousands of years, and all that we know of the period is from the narratives in the Vedas themselves. The facts that we gather from these narratives show that the Aryans have already come to the rich valleys of the Indus and the Ganges, and have settled there by conquering the aborigines. They were a nation of growing people, with young blood in their veins, highly moral and religious. They were pushing their inquiries into every department. Truthfulness and morality were regarded very highly. The marriage system had already been introduced and chastity in women was highly honored. The caste system was already growing naturally amongst them, and they had divided themselves into the two castes, the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas (or the warriors). Those in society who were highly advanced in spirituality and were devoting all their energies towards that end were regarded as Brahmins; and the rest, who were devoting their energies to conquest and war and other affairs, were the Kshatriyas. We find that this caste system was not regarded as very rigorous; the best men in society were regarded as Brahmins, and the qualities of a man made him a Brahmin and not the circumstances of his birth. Everywhere we find traces that the caste system arose naturally on account of social conditions, as in every other nation, and had nothing to do with the religion. The polytheism of the early times has al-

ready developed into monotheism; nay, some of the great sages have already arrived at the truths of monism and the unity of the Soul. The theory of the cosmology of Kapila, that nature is evolving and involving from all eternity, has been universally adopted. Looking to material civilization, we find descriptions of the courts of good and great kings; of female education and the institution of women monks who discussed abstruse metaphysical questions with the men in the courts of kings, the description of Aranyakas or men who with their wives were living the latter part of their lives in beautiful forests or by the sides of rivers and devoting themselves entirely to religion and meditation. . . .

The battle of Kurukshetra (described in the Mahabharata) marks a great change in the social and political life of India. Almost all the kings who joined in the fight were killed. One great factor of society, the warrior caste, became thus annihilated. The result was that the other half, the Brahmins, suddenly rose to great power. The high spiritual teachings of Sri Krishna and the Bhagavad-Gita went on very well for some time. But the disturbed balance in society was never restored, and the conservation of power grew more and more on the side of the priests. The real religion of the Vedanta was practised by a few only, and those few left society and took to the forest life, or the life of a monk; and the great mass of people in society became more ignorant and superstitious day by day, when the great Buddha, "the ocean of light and compassion," took his birth. He joined the order of monks in his thirtieth year and by means of his pure life and courageous teachings succeeded in bringing back the true Vedanta religion to the people; for the religion which Buddha taught is nothing more or less than the Karma-Yoga of the

Vedanta, which teaches that unselfish work will lead men to the highest stage of development, the super-conscious state.

Freed from the trammels of ignorance by the powerful touch of Buddha, society and the people rose again to a high stage of progress. The condition of India at this period can best be seen by reading the accounts which the Greeks have left of the country and the inscriptions of the Buddhist King, Asoka. In the Greek accounts we find that the people are strong and brave and highly moral, so much so that in many places there is no use for any law-courts. Truthfulness is natural to them. The women are all chaste and beautiful and educated. They are a very kind people and extremely hospitable.

In time Buddhism got mixed up with phallus worship and other symbols and ceremonials prevalent in Thibet and other parts of Asia, and degenerated India more than ever. The birth of the great teacher Sankara at this time saved the country again from the bondage of vice and corruption. He is perhaps the greatest philosopher that India has ever produced. His pure life and great genius enabled him to guide his country safe through the period of religious anarchy which prevailed at the downfall of Buddhism. The date of Sankara is, like the chronology of all other things in India, wrapped up in mystery. The Hindus place him nearly as far back as the first or the second century after the birth of Christ, while modern scholars place him between the 5th and 7th centuries of that era. In any case the Mahomedan conquest of India took place long after the birth of Sankara and the account which the Mahomedans give of the country and the people, will suffice to show the high ethical conditions in India brought about by the teachings of Sankara's philosophy. The Mahomedans when they

first came to India also found the people brave, loyal, truthful and kind. They would not be false to their enemies or use any unfair means even in the battlefield. They would not march their soldiers over their enemies' cornfields or poison the wells. The women were very chaste, and the men were perfectly moral and peaceful. The women had an almost equal position in society, as the laws regarding property and inheritance show. . . .

The one strong fact which shows the strength of the Vedanta and its ethics is that it has survived and triumphed in its turn over all the numerous invasions of the existing great religions . . . because it is based on principles broad as the heavens, which underlie every particular religion; because it teaches that the whole universe is one indivisible unit so that by loving you I love myself, and by hating and doing injury to you, I am doing the same to myself; and because it teaches the grand truth that all the different religions are true, they are all so many different ways to attain to that Infinite Ocean of Knowledge, Existence, and Bliss.

REPORT.

Swami Paramananda is expected to reach Boston about the first of November and will at once take charge of all the Services and Classes at the Vedanta Centre. His season in Los Angeles has been in every way most gratifying to those who have been persistent in their desire to have a permanent Centre there. Many new people have affiliated themselves with the work and from week to week a steadily growing interest in the teaching has been manifest. Likewise at the Boston Centre there was great activity throughout October. A number of strangers were seen at the Services and the attendance was excellent at all meetings. Sister Devamata was invited to speak also during the month at the New Thought Library and before the Metaphysical Club.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

With this number THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST completes its sixth volume. The present moment is an extremely difficult one for all publication work and we therefore make an especially urgent appeal to our subscribers and readers to lend their cooperation, not only by renewing their own subscriptions promptly, but also if possible by subscribing for their friends and by making the magazine known to others. We shall always be glad to mail sample copies.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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GOD AND THE WORLD.

By Swami Ramakrishnananda.

No man who has not true love towards God can be religious. Religion begins when attraction towards God is greater than attraction towards the world. Our Master, Sri Ramakrishna, used to say that there are two loadstones in the body, one below and the other above. The mind is like a piece of iron in the middle. If the lower loadstone is the stronger, the mind will be drawn downward; if the upper loadstone is the stronger, then it will be attracted upward. In most people the lower loadstone is all clear and able to attract the mind, while the upper one is so covered with the dirt and dust of *Tamas* (ignorance and impurity) that it cannot exercise the least power of attraction. Remove the dirt and dust and at once the mind will be drawn to God. In all men of the world the attraction is downward towards sense-pleasure and worldliness. If this lower loadstone ceases to attract, it is because some stronger attraction is being exerted and that attraction is God. The attraction upwards, towards God, is called religion; the downward attraction, towards the world, is irreligion. Therefore no man can begin to be religious who has not a strong love towards God.

You cannot mix these two attractions, however. As

light cannot be mixed with darkness, so God cannot be mixed with Mammon. The attraction towards the world means egotism, attraction towards God means self-surrender. The very existence of egotism shows that man is a bond-slave to the world. For what is the world? It is sense pleasure, it is money, it is names and fame. We see something that attracts us and we say: "I must have that; it must be mine." But there are perhaps a hundred others who also want the same thing, so we begin to fight for it. Thus competition and struggle come. Out of this struggle rises the idea of *my* right, *my* property, *my* advantage; hence an ever-growing consciousness of ego. But this is an active aggressive condition, while the first condition of being attracted is to have a sense of complete surrender. The iron is wholly passive when it is drawn to the magnet. So long, therefore, as a man is struggling for his rights and believes he is the actor, he cannot feel the attraction of God. Only when he becomes perfectly surrendered does he begin to be drawn upward. When he says with full conviction: "I can do nothing of myself; Lord, do Thou act;" then that upper loadstone begins to exercise its power.

As long as we keep asking: "Lord, shall I do this or that? Shall I go here or there?", we may be sure that we cannot know the Divine Will; because this means that our egotism is in full play. If, however, we can let go completely and say: "Lord, do whatever Thou wilt, I belong to Thee. Guide me wholly according to Thy wisdom;" then at once God will show us the way. Whenever we pray to God in right earnest, He is sure to come to us. The trouble is we pray to so many others beside God. We pray to the doctor to give us health, and to the shopkeeper to give us food or dress, and in among the rest

we pray to God to give us spiritual light and knowledge. When we look to Him alone and pray to Him and to no one else, He never fails to answer our prayers, if we make them really intense.

Actually very few of us believe in God all the time. How do we know this? Because we allow anxieties and fears to arise in our minds. If we really have faith in God and in His infinite power and goodness, we can never feel fearful about anything. God is the only one who can free us from desires and fears, hence He is called the Purifier. What makes the mind impure? Desire. Free the mind of all desire and at once it becomes pure. A man, however, who has no idea of God can never get rid of desires. He will rather say: "Desire is the only thing that makes life pleasant. If I have no desires, what difference will there be between me and the wall? It is desire alone that gives me enjoyment. If I had no hunger, I could not enjoy good dishes; if I had no thirst, I could not enjoy a refreshing drink. For every desire in me I find a satisfaction in the world. I have hunger, there is food; I have thirst, there is water; so it is through desire that I enjoy the world." Believing this, he will never be willing to give up desire.

The lover of God, on the other hand, sees that instead of bringing enjoyment these desires are the source of all his miseries. He understands that in God alone can he find the satisfaction of all desire, for He is infinite bliss and all other pleasures are finite and perishable. *Anandam* or bliss is the best definition of God; and if God is bliss, then no man is an atheist, because everyone is seeking a happiness which has no break and that happiness is God. The real Ideal of every human being is *Satchidanandam,* — Eternal Life, Infinite Knowledge and Everlasting Joy; for

all men wish to live forever, to be all-knowing and to have eternal bliss. But God alone is all-life, all-knowledge and all-happiness; therefore God is really the Ideal of every living being.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "First let a man know his infinite nature, then let him play with the finite. First seek God, then the world." Or as Christ taught: "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven." Let God shine alone in His glory. Now we let the ego shine above Him and we throw God into the background. We make Him the last consideration. We seek matter first and spirit afterwards. We should reverse the process. Our hearts also must be free from any ulterior motive. If we love God for what we can get from Him in the world, we really love the world, not God, and we can never be true devotees. The true devotee loves God just for the joy of loving Him, because God is his Beloved.

PRAYER.

By the Persian Sufi Jami.

O God, deliver us from preoccupation with worldly vanities and show us the nature of things as they really are. Remove from our eyes the veil of ignorance and show us things as they really are. Show not to us non-existence as existent, nor cast the veil of non-existence over the beauty of existence. Make this phenomenal world the mirror to reflect the manifestations of Thy beauty, and not a veil to separate and repel us from Thee. Cause these unreal phenomena of the universe to be for us the sources of knowledge and insight, not the cause of ignorance and blindness. Our alienation and severance from Thy beauty all proceed from ourselves. Deliver us from ourselves, and accord to us intimate knowledge of Thee.

APOCRYPHAL TEACHINGS OF CHRIST.

According to Mohammedan Agrapha.

Jesus said: Take not the world for your lord, lest it take you for its slaves. Lay up your treasure with Him who will not waste it.

Jesus said: Ye company of apostles, verily I have overthrown the world upon her face for you; raise her not up after me. It is a mark of the foulness of this world that God is disobeyed therein, and that the future world cannot be attained save by abandonment of this; pass then through this world and linger not there, and know that the root of every sin is love of the world. Often doth the pleasure of an hour bestow on him that enjoyeth it long pain.

He said again: The world seeketh and is sought. If a man seeketh the next world, this world seeketh him till he obtain therein his full sustenance; but if a man seeketh this world, the next world seeketh him till death cometh and taketh him by the throat.

Jesus said: The love of this and of the next cannot agree in a believer's heart, even as fire and water cannot agree in a single vessel.

Jesus said: Woe to him who hath this world, seeing that he must die and leave it and all that is in it! It deceiveth him, and it betrayeth him.

Jesus said: Who is it that buildeth on the waves of the sea? Such is the world. Take it not for your resting-place.

Jesus said: Ye company of apostles, be satisfied with a humble portion in this world, so your faith be whole; even as the people of this world are satisfied with a humble portion in faith, so this world be secured to them.

Jesus used to say: I warm myself in winter in the sun;

my candle is the moon; my mounts are my feet; my food and dainties are the fruits of the earth; neither at even-tide nor in the morning have I aught in my possession, yet no one on earth is richer than I.

Jesus said: The world is a place of transition, full of examples; be pilgrims therein, and take warning by the traces of those that have gone before.

Jesus said: Be in the midst, yet walk on one side.

Jesus said: I have treated the leprous and the blind and have cured them; but when I have treated the fool, I have failed to cure him.

God revealed unto Jesus: Command the children of Israel that they enter not my house save with pure hearts and humble eyes and clean hands.

Jesus said: Who knoweth and doeth and teacheth, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus said: Commit not wisdom to those who are not meet for it, lest ye harm it; and withhold it not from them that are meet for it, lest ye harm them. Be like a gentle physician, who putteth the remedy on the diseased spot.

Jesus said: How can he be a wise man who, when his journey is unto the next world, maketh for the things of this world? How can he be a wise man who seeketh for words in order to communicate by them, not in order to act according to them?

God said unto Jesus: Exhort thyself, and if thou hast profited by the exhortation, then exhort others; otherwise be ashamed before Me.

Jesus said: Converse with those whose presence will remind you of God, whose words will increase your works, and whose works will make you desire the next world.

Jesus was asked by some men to guide them to some course whereby they might enter Paradise. He said: Speak

not at all. They said: "We cannot do this." He said: Then only say what is good.

Jesus said: Devotion is of ten parts. Nine of them consist in silence, and one in solitude.

Malike, son of Dinan, said: "Jesus one day walked with his apostles, and they passed by the carcass of a dog. The apostles said, 'How foul is the smell of this dog!' But Jesus said: How white are his teeth!

Christ passed by certain of the Jews,who spake evil of Him; but He spake good to them in return. It was said to Him: "Verily these speak ill unto thee and thou dost speak good?" He said: Each giveth out of his store.

WHO IS OUR SAVIOUR?

By Swami Paramananda.

If we wish to be saved we must connect ourselves with the source of salvation. We may have a hidden treasure, but we must be conscious of it; otherwise we suffer from poverty. Similarly, unless we know our connection with the Infinite Ocean of Life and Wisdom, we cannot be saved by It. That is the real significance of the idea that Christ takes the burden of those who come to Him. Why does He not take the burden of all? Because all do not cast their burden on Him. The majority of us rely on our ego, not on Him. But so long as we depend on that which is perishable and limited, we shall never attain to that which is imperishable and lasting. Saviours have come and gone, yet how many souls have failed to recognize them! This shows that we cannot be saved until we have unfolded certain spiritual qualities within ourselves. Man has been blessed countless times by God and by Great Teachers, he has been given frequent opportunities to save himself, but

he has not been able to profit by them because his mind is under the sway of ego.

Unless the mind is ready, even though a Saviour may come He can do little for us. It is the mind which causes all our unrest and it is the mind which makes us calm and serene; it is this mind which makes us happy and this very same mind can make us miserable. We should take care of this mind, therefore, because it is the determining factor in all our undertakings. Upon it alone rests our success or failure. No one can say then that our destiny depends on anything outside ourselves. For this reason Sri Krishna declares in the Bhagavad-Gita: "Let a man raise himself by his Higher Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself and he alone is the enemy of himself. He who has conquered himself by his Higher Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy, like an external foe." The idea, therefore, that if we believe on a certain Saviour we have only to fold our hands and let Him save us, is a grave mistake. Unless we lead a true life and uplift ourselves, even a Saviour cannot bring us salvation.

It is only through the life that we can prove the truth of a Saviour's message. We must not only hear His words, but assimilate them; and assimilation requires practice, leading an inner spiritual life. Christ declared that not those who merely cry, "Lord! Lord!" will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but those who do God's will. Buddha taught His disciples never to try to convert by words, but by holy acts; because He knew that the only true help lies in converting a man's Soul to righteousness, not merely in changing his faith from one form to another. Living the life is what every Saviour preaches; infilling each thought,

deed and word with spiritual power. Spirituality is a living force. When we allow ourselves to be wholly guided by this force, resisting all lower impulses, we make ourselves ready for the Lord's saving Grace. The mirror of our heart must be washed clean by the practice of forbearance, charity and loving-kindness towards all, then it will be able to reflect the image of our Saviour.

Those who are unworthy have not the spiritual sight necessary to perceive a Saviour. Who is to know when God comes? Only those who are God-like, whose vision is clear. We must first prepare the field. We must have a real thirst for righteousness in our hearts. We must feel as Buddha felt,— that this whole world is a vast prison-house, that life is not safe without Truth. Although surrounded by luxury and living in conditions which mortals most long for, He saw misery and death hunting Him at every step and He felt He must save His fellowmen from these. To do it He plunged within Himself; He fixed His whole heart in His inner being and that gave Him the power to discover the remedy for all mortal ills.

The true Saviour is within us. As soon as we analyze and turn our thought inward, we discover that the Kingdom of Heaven is an inner spiritual state, not an external realm of enjoyment. Merely believing that someone from the outside can save us is not sufficient. Ignorance is the cause of our bondage; rising out of ignorance is our salvation. In accomplishing this, the personal example and inspiration of a Saviour or Divinely-appointed Teacher is of incalculable help. We must, however, establish a close relation with Him; we must listen to His voice and obey His teachings. Simply declaring ourselves His followers with fanatical devotion will not open us to His saving Grace. We must mould our life in the smallest detail ac-

cording to His injunctions; we must constantly bear in mind that the saving power of religion does not lie in a superficial acceptance of the form, but in holy living. We must base our daily actions on the fundamental principles of every religion,—humility, purity and love. We must give up all hypocrisy and half-heartedness. We must be absolutely sincere in our spiritual devotion.

It does not matter what personal Saviour we follow. If in our daily living we practise the teachings of any great Teacher, we shall surely realize the One who is the basic rock of all. The idea of a Saviour cannot be limited to one form or to one conception of Divinity. According to Vedanta, God comes to earth whenever there is a need; and He comes to all men, not to one special group of people. His form is universal. He is the Infinite Father of all, but He appears to His children in many different garments. When we lack direct perception of Truth, we see differences and sow seeds of discord; but the more we grow in inner wisdom, the more we shall learn to tolerate all creeds and see the same God in all Saviours.

EARLY CHRISTIAN HYMN.

By St. Joseph of Studium, 9th Century.

(Translated from the Greek.)

O happy band of pilgrims,
If onward ye will tread
With Jesus as your fellow,
To Jesus as your Head!

O happy, if ye labor
As Jesus did for men;
O happy, if ye hunger
As Jesus hungered then!

The Cross that Jesus carried,
He carried as your due;
The Crown that Jesus weareth,
He weareth it for you.

The faith by which ye see Him,
The Hope in which ye yearn,
The Love that through all troubles
To Him alone will turn,—

What are they but vaunt-couriers
To lead you to His sight?
What are they save the effluence
Of Universal Light?

The trials that beset you,
The sorrows ye endure,
The manifold temptations
That Death alone can cure,—

What are they but His jewels
Of right celestial worth?
What are they but the ladder
Set up to Heav'n on Earth?

O happy band of pilgrims,
Look upward to the skies,—
When such a light affliction
Shall win you such a prize!

How high art Thou in the highest, and how deep in the deepest! And Thou never departest, and we scarcely return to Thee. Up, Lord, and do; stir us up, and recall us; kindle and draw us; inflame, grow sweet unto us; let us now love, let us run.

— *St. Augustine.*

THE CHRISTMAS FEAST.

By Sister Devamata.

In the early Christian Church there was no uniform date for the celebration of the birthday of Jesus. Clement of Alexandria speaks of some communities who observed it on the 20th of May, others on the 19th or 20th of April, while he himself believed it to come on the 17th of November, 3 B. C.; still others fixed it on January 6th. The author of a Latin tract written in Africa claimed by virtue of private revelation that it fell on March 28th; and the reason he gives is that when the Saviour appeared, the earth must have been in the most perfect state,—flowers in bloom, trees in leaf, the moon full, and on March 28th all these conditions were most completely fulfilled. The first known identification of the birthday with December 25th is mentioned by Theophilus of Antioch (A. D. 171-183); but there can be little doubt that this could not have been the date, since that is the wet season in Judea and the shepherds could scarcely have been watching their flocks on the rain-swept plains around Bethlehem. Chrysostom in a sermon preached at Antioch on December 20th, 386 or 388 A. D., again mentions the 25th of December as the proper date, and there was evidently a growing tendency to observe it on that day; but we find no evidence of any general concensus of opinion regarding it before the 5th century. The year was equally uncertain, it would appear. The Church Father Irenaeus (A. D. 190) declares on the authority of "all the elders who were conversant in Asia with John, the disciple of the Lord," that Jesus lived to be nearly fifty years of age and must therefore have been born much earlier than recorded. Cannon Farrar, more conservative, writes that "there is at least a large amount of evidence that He was born four years before our era;"

while the Church historian, Eusebius, places His birth at about 10 A. D.

With such complete absence of fact or even concordant tradition regarding the moment when Jesus took birth, it became necessary to fix arbitrarily a date for the Feast of the Nativity; and it seemed but natural and logical to choose one which already had a sacred association in the minds of the people. From the beginning of history the 25th of December appears to have been consecrated by a common observance in practically every country and by every nation. In China there are still religious solemnities at the time of the winter solstice; all shops are closed and the courts suspended. The ancient Persians celebrated the birthday of their Lord and Saviour Mithras on December 25th. Among the ancient Egyptians their Deity Horus was believed to have been born on the night of the winter solstice, and each year an image of the Holy Child was brought out of the sanctuary with solemn ceremonies on December 25th, as the sacred Bambino is today exhibited in Rome; while the "Chronicles of Alexandria," an ancient Christian work, tell us further that this son of the Virgin Isis "was exposed in a crib to the adoration of the people." Among the Greeks, Bacchus was supposed to have been born at early dawn on the 25th of December and in his Mysteries he too was shown to the people as an infant. The birth of Hercules and of Adonis was also celebrated on the same day. In Rome this was equally a very holy festival, observed under the name of *Natalis Solis Invicti* (the Nativity of Sol the Invincible). "It was a day of universal rejoicings. All public business was suspended, declarations of war and criminal executions were postponed and friends made presents to one another."

The name Yule as applied to Christmas comes to us from

the ancient Germans and referred likewise to the feast of the winter solstice. It was a time for the renewal of agreements, the consultation of the gods and for lavish hospitality. The Scandinavians also celebrated their "Jul" on this "Mother-night," spending it in riotous feasting, and at its close the most important guests received presents,—usually horses, battle axes, swords and gold rings. "The Druids," Godfrey Higgins writes, "kept this night as a great festival and called the day following it Nolagh or Noel, or the day of regeneration, and celebrated it with great fires on the tops of their mountains, which they repeated on the day of the Epiphany or Twelfth Night." In Britain, December 25th was a feast day long before the Britons were converted to Christianity. Bede narrates that "the ancient peoples of England began the year on the 25th of December, when we now celebrate the birthday of the Lord, and the very night which is now so holy to us, they called in their tongue *Modranecht*, that is, the Mothers' Night, by reason we suspect of the ceremonies which in that night-long vigil they performed." To these Northern races we also owe the use of evergreen garlands and gift-laden trees.

Thus we see that on this special day almost every nation of the world celebrated the nativity of a Virgin-born Saviour. What wonder then, as Mr. Gibbon declares in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, that "The Roman Christians, ignorant of the real date of His (Christ's) birth, fixed the solemn festival to the 25th of December, the *Brumalia* or Winter Solstice, when the Pagans annually celebrated the birth of Sol." St Chrysostom (390 A. D.) tells us that they did this "in order that, whilst the heathen were busy with their profane ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed." The reason,

however, lay deeper, we believe. Already the festival was dear to them; and also, in adopting not only this but various pre-Christian holy days, they were probably moved by the same natural impulse which led originally to their choice. In every human heart there is an innate sense of the fitness of things, a memory of Divine Harmony, of that perfectly ordered law which brings each thing in its due season and manifests on all planes in perfect balance. The Saviour comes at the moment of greatest need, that is, when densest darkness envelops the souls of men; why should that not be linked with the season when the nights are long and the hours of daylight few? Why should not the rebirth of the earth at the turn of the sun stand beside the rebirth of mankind at the rising of the Redeemer? And why should the joining of the two conceptions, or the discovery that it has been done down the ages, resolve the holier idea into a myth?

Humanity is one; and as the same life-giving sun has waxed and waned through the centuries, shedding its light on the peoples of the earth without respect of persons, so has Nature taught her children the same lessons by the same symbols in the same way at all times over the entire world. History repeats itself, as does Sacred Lore and Scripture, because the drama of life, with all its diversity in detail, is ever the same. Human passion and human aspiration are unaltered by race or creed, and the human heart lives out the same story of Divine unfoldment wherever or whatever it may worship. That the Christian Church and Christ's life contain facts or customs of an earlier day does not weaken or disprove their authenticity. It shows rather that they are rooted more deeply in the human consciousness and need. Narrow indeed must be the mind which would revoice the words of Tertulian, a

Church Father of the 3rd century, who in writing to his brethren declares it to be "rank idolatry" to hang their doors "with garlands or flowers on festival days according to the custom of the heathen;" or which could feel with those Puritans who in 1644 by an act of Parliament forbade any merriment or religious services on December 25th because it was a pagan festival. Those also who would discount as myth what has been a persistent repetition in human life and thought, have not seen far below the surface and know little of the simple round of Nature's ways.

That which has no foundation in reality cannot live down the ages. Besides, dates and events do not make a Saviour. Divine facts need no support from history. Whether the Christ-Ideal rises out of the hunger of man's higher nature, as embodied in the myths of every nation; or whether these myths and legends spring out of the lives of mighty God-Men; the reality of the Divine, breaking like a flashing sun-ray through the storm-clouds of human error at the moment of darkest agony, cannot be denied. Any religious faith, no doubt, is vulnerable that makes the Divine rest on the human, the Infinite on the finite; and the Church, so far as it has held tenaciously to historic authenticity or has made exclusive claims to certain facts and truths, has opened itself to violent shocks which have threatened at times to shake its very foundations. Yet, however theology may suffer by the revelations of science, true religion will pass through every fire of research unscathed. And when all the noise of argument has ceased and the voices of higher criticism have died away into silence, there on the barren hill of Golgotha will still tower the cross of the Crucified One, symbol of supreme sacrifice; still shall we find the new-born Child in the manger at Bethlehem, with the pure-hearted Mary bending over Him;

still will the sweet notes of Sri Krishna's flute sound in the fields of Vrindavan; still round the flaming Yule log, the air fragrant with fir and balsam and pine, we shall hear how "whenever religion declines and irreligion prevails," God comes to earth "to destroy evil, to protect the good, to restore religion," and "to bring peace and good will among men."

TO THE GOD RA.

Rendered from Egyptian Hymns.

Hail to Thee, Ra, at Thy rising; the night and the darkness are past.

At the dawn of the day Thou shinest, the heavens are filled with Thy light.

King of the Gods art Thou, all glory and triumph are Thine.

The Gods come as dogs to Thy feet, rejoicing to greet Thee at dawn.

Hail to Thee, Ra, at Thy rising; at Thy coming all men are made glad.

In joy dost Thou come in the morning, with glory Thou rulest the world.

The stars of the heavens adore Thee, the Gods of the earth extol Thee.

Mighty Lord of the heavens art Thou!

Hail to Thee, Ra, at Thy rising!

None can express Thy glory, Lord of all Wisdom and Truth;

The Souls of the East attend Thee, the Souls of the West are Thy servants. The North and the South exalt Thee.

Worshipped art Thou, our Ruler, by those whom Thou hast created.

Thou risest in heaven's horizon, Thou causest mankind to rejoice.

Hail to Thee, Ra, at Thy rising, at Thy rising in glory, O Ra!

TRUE AND FALSE WORSHIP

From the Talmud.

They asked our sages in Rome, says the Babylonian Talmud: "If your God is displeased with men's worship of other gods, why does He not make it void by destroying all idols and objects of false worship?"

"If the objects of false worship," replied our sages, "were things unnecessary to mankind and to the world, then this might be. But behold, they adore the sun and moon and the constellations; plants and animals; and the trees and the streams, and many other things both useful and beautiful. Shall the Creator destroy His world because of the fools?"

Then said they of Rome: "But there are among the objects of what you call false worship some that are useless to mankind—stones and blocks of wood and hideous effigies. If your God be, as your prophet says, 'a consuming fire,' why does He not burn up these and spare only such as the world really needs?"

"If God were to destroy some of the idols," replied our sages, "and were to spare others, this would strengthen the heads of the idolaters. For then, indeed, would those whose gods had been spared exclaim: 'Behold ours are proved to be true gods, for all the false ones have been destroyed.'

"Nor is this all. God has formed a world full of beauty and order; a universe full of exquisitely adjusted laws that work together for good. There is nothing in it useless or evil or even superfluous. Shall God destroy His world, or interfere with its order and the regular working of His perfect laws, because of the fools that abuse His gifts?

"Suppose a man steals a measure of wheat and sows his field with it: according to judgment and religion it ought

not to grow. But Nature goes on her orderly course as fixed by the Creator, and those that treat His laws with contempt are destined to have to render an account."

LET THY GARMENTS BE WHITE

Hebrew Parable.

"It is said, 'Let thy garments always be white, and let not oil be wanting for thine head!' Doth then the Scripture care about white garments and oil for the hair?" asks Rabbi Jochanan ben Zachai. "For have not the heathen plenty of white garments and many oils for anointing the head?"

Behold the Scripture speaks in figurative language of the commandments: of religious duties and good works, and of the Torah. Rabbi Judah, the Prince, likened it to a certain king who made a banquet and invited travellers and strangers to it. He sent word to them: "Wash ye, make ye clean and anoint yourselves, and wash your clothes and prepare yourselves for the banquet of the king." But he did not appoint a time. Then the prudent among them made themselves ready and waited at the entrance of the palace. They said: "In the palace of the king nothing will be wanting and there need be no signs of preparation, but the feast may be ready at any time." The stupid among them, however, did not prepare themselves. They said: "There cannot be a great banquet without much stir and trouble and gathering together of stores and provisions. We need not disturb ourselves until we see signs of preparation at the palace." So they joined themselves with their fellows, and thought only of their common and everyday interests, and took no thought of the word of the king. The plasterer went to his plastering, and the potter to his clay, and those working with pitch and tar and

at other dirty trades went on with their ordinary occupations.

Suddenly came the word of the king: "Let all come to the banquet!" And the servants of the king hastened them and pressed them to come forthwith at the bidding of the king. Then those that had not prepared themselves came in their pollution and uncleanliness. And the king rejoiced over the wise that had done according to his bidding, and who, moreover, had honoured the royal palace; and he was angry with those who had taken no heed of his word, but who had polluted his royal palace with all the uncleanliness that clung about their garments and had treated it with contempt.

Then said the king: "Those that have prepared themselves for my presence and were ready when I called, shall come and feast at the royal table; and those that did not prepare themselves shall not eat at the banquet." They thought perhaps they might depart, but the king replied: "No, but those shall recline at the banquet and eat and drink, while these stand upon their feet and are smitten and look on distressed." Thus of the life to come, this is what Isaiah says: "My servants shall eat and you shall be hungry." It is said, in the name of Rabbi Meir, that also the unprepared were allowed to sit at the table of the king, but not allowed to eat and drink; and their suffering was infinitely greater than if they had been made to stand. For they who stand and do not eat and drink are only like waiters and attendants, but those who sit at the board and are not treated as guests are shamed and disgraced.

And this is a truer picture of the life to come as indicated by the prophet Malachi: "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." Let thy

garments always be white in sinlessness, and let the ointment of good deeds and holiness be never lacking for thy head. . . . There is an old traditional saying transmitted by the sages of the Mishnah, "Return to God in repentance, one day before thy death." His disciples asked Rabbi Eliezar: "But how is a man to know the day of his death, so that he may become penitent?" "That is just the point," explained the Rabbi. "Repent today; tomorrow you may die."

A man should be found turning from sin to God every day of his life; therefore it is said, let thy garments at all times be white.

REPORTS

For some time past, frequent announcements of the establishment by the Ramakrishna Mission of new hospitals, schools and other needed philanthropic institutions have come to us; but no report has brought a more vivid picture of the Mission's expanding usefulness than the one just received, telling of the Relief Work carried on by its members during twelve months only. Although the war has raged far from Indian soil, it has nonetheless struck a deadly blow at India. The closing of European mills has meant no market for jute and the farmers in Bengal were forced in 1914 to dispose of their crops at one-tenth the normal price. This meant ruin, which was made complete by a second season of destructive planting due to a pest of insects. The result was a wide-spread famine. At once the Mission sent a band of workers to the affected districts; and we find them feeding during the first month 5590 starving souls in 460 villages, and the following month 11,186 persons in 927 villages. When a small harvest relieved the pressure of want here, greater activity was centred in other regions where floods had wrought

terrible havoc by submerging the unripe crops and sweeping away houses and cattle. In Northern Tipperah, Calchar, Silchar and elsewhere members of the Mission could be seen pushing over the flooded area in open boats, often in danger because of the heavy windstorms that lashed the waves into fury, yet determined even at the risk of drowning to carry relief to the thousands of men, women and children calling across the waters for help.

Before these young men had finished their task, others were rushed to answer a loud cry of distress caused by a continuous drought and consequent famine. Here the rescuing band undertook a vigorous irrigating campaign—digging canals many miles in length, sinking cemented walls, making new tanks, and clearing springs and ponds; thereby not only quenching the thirst of thousands, but permanently bettering the agricultural conditions and also furnishing employment to more than fifteen thousand hungry laborers who because of the imposed suspension of all cultivation were left without work. In one region only, the Government requested the Mission to take charge of the relief of three towns and thirty unions, which covered over 250 square miles of territory.

During the year under review more than one million pounds of rice were distributed; 86,259 persons were saved from starvation, and 5,466 villages were relieved and restored. The succor given, however, was not limited to food only. Temporary hospitals were established along the way and hundreds of sick or injured were given the best medical care; large numbers of people were clothed; where necessary, money was supplied; those whose houses had been destroyed by flood or the ravaging fires which followed the long droughts, received building materials; farmers were given seeds for planting and weavers yarn for

their looms. A number of Girls' Schools were also saved from collapse by timely financial aid and personal assistance. No one can read the report of the work done without feeling a glow of satisfaction and a desire that the Mission may be able to extend still more this department of its service. A permanent Relief Fund was started several years ago, but by no means suffices for the heavy demands upon it; and were it not for the energetic coöperation of other bands of workers who devote themselves to collecting money and materials as they are distributed, it would not be possible to do what is done at present. The hope is that the Relief Fund may be put on such a basis that no call for help from any part of India may go unheard.

* * * *

We have received an interesting report from a new Home of Service recently established at Silchar, Assam, under the direction of the Ramakrishna Mission. Several members of the Mission were sent to Silchar to carry on Relief work after the floods in July 1915 and the young men of the district, who assisted them, became so impressed by the selfless devotion of the Sannyasis that they banded themselves into a League to continue their good work. The present Home of Service is the outcome of the League. In connection with it there is a free Library and a Night School for poor boys who are forced to work during regular school hours. The League members have also formed a Fire Brigade to fight the destructive fires which often break out in that locality.

* * * *

On the first Sunday in November Swami Paramananda resumed charge of the Services, delivering an address on "Thought-Force and Prana," in which he made plain the

great responsibility resting on every human being to make proper use of the powerful instrument of mind placed in his hands. "Thought," he said, "may not always be constructive, but it is always productive," hence every thought we think is creating something which is bound to react on our life and character. This idea was further emphasized in his address, the following Sunday, on "The Law of Human Destiny," which was listened to with special appreciation and interest. With convincing clearness he showed how each of us is weaving his own destiny, of shining threads or dull, according to our desires and deeds; and by a natural sequence, in his next address, he made an earnest appeal to every sincere seeker to strive to learn "The Science of Self-Mastery," that no more time be wasted on the way, but that the conduct of our life be placed in the keeping of our Higher Self so that we may become truly Self-possessed, or possessed of our Soul-nature, instead of being slaves to the lower propensities of our mind and body.

On Thursday, November 15th, the Swami gave an informal reception to the students and friends of the Centre. A large number responded to his invitation and the evening proved exceptionally enjoyable because of the delightful singing of the eminent Spanish baritone, M. Ramon Blanchart, and his daughter, who possesses a well-trained soprano voice of rare quality. Mr. Blanchart sang for many seasons at "La Scala" in Milan and is well known throughout Europe. He has also been a prominent member of the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York. Miss Blanchart has not yet begun her public career. Being devoted members of the Centre, unfailingly present at every meeting, it was with evident joy that they seized the opportunity to express their love for the work and this lent an even deeper charm to the beauty of their art.

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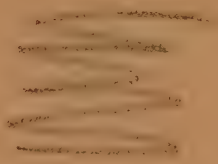

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF YOGA.

By Swami Paramananda.

As physical science strives to demonstrate the laws of the material universe before it accepts them, so the science of Yoga seeks to prove the laws of the spiritual world. The one is the science of the seen, the other the science of the unseen. The aim of both is knowledge, but the processes employed necessarily vary. When people out of spiritual yearning want to prove the deeper facts of existence, Yoga offers them certain methods by which the revelation of these facts can be gained. The word means literally "union" — union between subject and object. Knowledge takes place through this union. There must always be some point of contact. We cannot know Truth from a distance. We may make a mental picture of It, but it cannot be exact. For precise knowledge there must be contact and this contact is Yoga.

There are, however, certain qualifications which we must possess before we can gain this union. First of all we must gather up our scattered forces and establish perfect unity in our own organism, between body, mind and Soul. The Yoga system is not limited to the spiritual. It applies equally to all planes of activity. Its practices are directed along three distinct lines,—physical, mental and spiritual. The first step deals with that which is most immediate to

us—our body. This special branch is known in India as Hatha-Yoga. Its chief aim is to establish a healthy balanced condition in the body through physical exercises, postures and by regulating the functions of the breath. It teaches us how to control every muscle, how to command all our energy, so that this physical organism which is now so often a drawback may become a powerful instrument for higher investigation. Through its practices we learn to carry ourselves with lightness and balance. A systematic knowledge of this branch of Yoga also helps us to prevent disease and decay. Longevity is one of the natural results of its study. Yogis live long because they know the laws of life and do not go against them, but we do not obey them because we are ignorant of them. People become nervous wrecks and invalids wholly because they transgress these laws. Yoga helps us to discover them and shows us how to obey them.

We imagine that we are born with certain tendencies and that these compel us to act in a certain way; but a Hatha Yogi—one who has attained absolute mastery over his body—claims that this is a mistake, that we have hypnotized ourselves into this negative thought, that there is no reason why we should follow blindly all our physical instincts. He tells us that we have latent powers within us, by awakening which we can unite our forces and gain all the strength necessary for complete mastery. Now we rush headlong, impelled by our self-imposed desires, until utterly exhausted we reach a state which we call old age. Yoga teaches that this is due wholly to our limited apprehension of the laws of life; that if we will but study our organism and learn to use it with moderation and understanding, we may make of this body a most efficient and valuable instrument. There are people who live long yet

never appear aged or worn out. This is because the Spirit within is beyond all time, space and causation; and as man is able to turn his thoughts to that Spirit it brings him an ever fresh supply of *Prana* or Life-Force.

The method by which we gain perfect control and balance in our physical system is known as *Asanam* or posture. The study of psychology shows that the greatest part of our activity originates in the spinal column, where all the main nerve centres are located. Therefore it becomes necessary for us to keep this passage clear by sitting, walking and lying properly, in order that the life current may not be obstructed. Abnormal positions may wholly block our higher progress. Through experience we know that different states of mind tend to express themselves by certain positions of the body; grief and depression bend down the head and spine and contract the muscles, while joy expands the chest and lifts the whole frame. The reverse is equally true: when we hold the body in certain positions, it seems to awaken certain kinds of thoughts. These fall into three general classes, called in Sanskrit *Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas*. Those thoughts which stimulate our lower brute instincts are produced by *Tamas*. They bring a sense of quietness, but it is the quietude of lethargy, not of concentrated energy. The second class, born of *Rajas*, give rise to nervous excitement, manifesting as excessive ambition, envy, jealousy, discontent and all those states of mind which spring from lack of poise. *Sattwa* is the balancing factor between these two extremes. Through the systematic practice of various postures we can overcome both physical heaviness and nervous unrest; the muscles and bones can be made more flexible, the flow of the nerve currents more even; and the whole system will gain greater lightness and endurance as well as better health.

Yoga offers a large number of different postures, each of which is supposed to quicken certain latent forces in the nerve centres. Many of them are very intricate and practically impossible for ordinary persons. Sitting cross-legged on the floor, being the steadiest of all postures, has been adopted throughout the Orient and all the varying postures in Yoga are based on this fundamental position; but those to whom this is too difficult can gain good results by sitting on a straight chair, of such a height that the legs from the thigh to the knee are perfectly horizontal and the feet firmly planted on the ground. The principal points to keep in mind are:—The back, neck and head must be in a straight line and the chest erect, so that the nerve currents may have free action; there must not be the slightest leaning forward or backward or at any angle. The lips must be kept closed, but the teeth must not touch; while the hands must be relaxed and rest in the lap. At first such a posture may seem unnatural, but Yoga declares that what we consider natural may be really unnatural and what is now unnatural for us may become perfectly natural.

Having taken the right posture, it is then necessary to make the breath rhythmic by maintaining an equal count for inhalation and exhalation. One of the commentators on Yoga says that this inbreathing and outbreathing serves as an automatic scrubber, cleansing the system of all impurities. Through lack of conscious direction of our physical functions we have lost the habit of normal regular breathing, and this is one of the main causes of weakness and ill health. With the different postures there are specific breathing exercises given, the purpose of which is to remove the density and lethargy of the body, to purify the nerve tissue and to establish a state of perfect balance. In every case, however, these must be modified to fit the

individual need and should never be practised indiscriminately or without competent guidance.

We must remember that all this physical study is not an end in itself, but merely a preparation for higher metaphysical research. Until we have gained a certain amount of mastery over our outer being, it is impossible to attain inner mastery; but when this preliminary work is done, the next and more important step is the training of the mind, which is accomplished through the practice of discrimination and concentration. Discrimination is that faculty of intelligence which enables us to ascertain the true value of all things in the universe. The right and constant exercise of this faculty increases the alertness and keenness of the mind. The study of logic, of mathematics and philosophy are especially directed to the cultivation of the power of discrimination; but any systematic effort in our daily life to distinguish between the real and apparent, the essential and non-essential, the fleeting and the lasting will develop it. Discrimination alone, however, will not safeguard our mental progress; for even though we may discover the real value of certain facts and laws, we are incapable of following them up without the power of concentration. Actually these two forms of mental activity are so inseparable that one cannot advance without the other. Discrimination like a searchlight points the way; concentration supplies the necessary power by which to reach the goal. Concentration means gathering up or focusing our scattered mental energies. As a general must gather together all his military resources before making an attack on the enemy, similarly our mind must assemble all its forces before it can hope to conquer Nature either without or within.

Concentration forms a vital part of Yoga; without it

we can accomplish but little, because our mind dissipates its energy and defeats its own ends. The majority of us have not begun to use the whole of this mind. We use only a fragment and it is for this reason that the field of our accurate knowledge is so limited. The first effort in concentration should be to withhold the mind from unnecessary activities. This is done by persistently restraining all wandering aimless thought, all idle conversation, and all non-essential interests, which now consume so much of our time and energy. We should next begin to diminish the circle of our thought until it is wholly indrawn to the centre and has reached that state which in Yoga is defined as *Ekagra* or one-pointed. In the preliminary stages it becomes necessary to have a definite concrete point on which to focus the thought,—between the eyebrows, on the tip of the nose, on the heart as a lotus-bud filled with light, on a picture or symbol. Each one can choose whatever appeals to him, provided it has a purifying and strengthening influence. The object is of secondary importance, the chief thing is the mastery of the mind. Just as unbroken horses are useless, so is an untrained mind; and we must sometimes even resort to rigid discipline in order to gain full control over it. As it grows more obedient, however, we are able to draw it gradually from objective to subtler subjective forms.

This leads naturally to the final step,—meditation. Meditation is the most practical of all branches of Yoga; because dealing as it does directly with our innermost life, its only method of expression is silent practice. But meditation does not mean holding the mind in a negative dreamy state or on a vague abstraction. It means the continuous flow of the thought towards the Ideal without any break. It brings the unseen world before us and makes it real to

us; then we no longer doubt or have confused ideas regarding spiritual things, but we know. Thus our Ideal becomes an absolute reality for us, and through this realization we are spiritually regenerated. Also the knowledge gained by such realization is perfect and unmistakable. The knowledge acquired through our sense perceptions is often erroneous, but when the mind is purified and the senses are spiritualized, then the vision which comes is free from error and productive of great good.

True meditation cannot be taught by words, because it is beyond words. It has rather to do with the deeper feelings of the Soul. First of all we must have eagerness to realize; and the more we cultivate this eagerness, the better fitted we become for the life of meditation. The steadfast practice of meditation lifts us by degrees to a state of consciousness known as *Samadhi* or superconsciousness, which is the ultimate goal of spiritual Yoga. When we reach this point, we are wholly freed from the bondage of the two lower stages of consciousness, known as the subconscious and the conscious. The subconscious represents the state of *Tamas*, dullness and inertia; the conscious corresponds to *Rajas* or the state of excessive activity; while in *Sattwa*, the state of pure serenity and lightness, we rise to the superconscious. It is when we are firmly established in this state, through the unbroken habit of meditation, that we gain all transcendental knowledge.

The system of Yoga has existed in India from time immemorial and has always been regarded as an exact science, as fully demonstrable as any department of natural science. It does not ask that anything be accepted on hearsay. It declares that if we do certain things, we shall get certain results as surely as in any experiment of chemistry or physics. For instance, it teaches that if a man can observe

the spirit of non-injury in his thoughts, words and deeds for a period of twelve years faithfully, he will acquire such subtle spiritual power that even the wild beasts of the jungle will forget their ferocity and become gentle in his presence. Christian saints have been known to experience this and it has been attributed to miraculous power; but in reality it was the natural outcome of a certain mode of living and thinking. If a man, again, practises absolute truthfulness in all that he says, thinks and does, whatever he wills comes to pass; or if he observes complete silence for a certain time, he will gain the power of prophecy. The steadfast practice of continence will also develop the power of healing. The various exercises in breathing and posture, already mentioned, will bring equally definite results in the form of physical strength, will power, and supersensuous perception. The difficulty is that experiments of this nature require great patience and perseverance; and when we lack these, we canot help but doubt the plausibility of such claims. But even when we are willing to persist, we must remember that each must do according to his own physical and mental capacity.

Moderation is absolutely necessary in order that we may maintain that perfect equilibrium, without which the goal cannot be reached. Too much is just as bad as not at all. Balance or evenness of mind is one of the definitions of Yoga given in the Bhagavad-Gita. Skillfulness in activity is another. This form of Yoga teaches how a man can take the most direct road to his end and thus avoid all wastefulness. There is nothing mysterious, dangerous or esoteric in the study of Yoga. It is is true that certain psychic powers may be manifested as the result of the practices, such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought-reading, etc.; but these are mere passing consequences,

which come to us as our inner organism becomes more purified and susceptible to finer vibrations. If we are careful not to attribute undue importance to them and move onward, we shall not be harmed or misled by them. We shall always be safe so long as we hold firmly before our mind's eye the ultimate goal of all the science and practice of Yoga, which is nothing short of direct vision of Truth and God-union.

ECSTASY OF DIVINE UNION.

Fragment of Song by Kabir.

(Translation by Rabindranath Tagore)

Behold how the thirst of the five senses is quenched there!
And the three forms of misery are no more!
Kabir says: "It is the sport of the Unattainable One: look within, and behold how the moonbeams of the Hidden One shine in you."

I have had my Seat on the Self-poised One,
I have drunk of the cup of the Ineffable,
I have found the Key of the Mystery,
I have reached the Root of Union.
Travelling by no track, I have come to the Sorrowless Land; very easily has the mercy of the great Lord come upon me.
They have sung of Him as infinite and unattainable; but I in my meditations have seen Him without sight.

That is indeed the Sorrowless Land, and none know the path that leads there;
Only he who is on that path has surely transcended all sorrow.
Wonderful is that land of rest, to which no merit can win;
It is the wise who has seen it, it is the wise who has sung of it.

This is the Ultimate Word; but can any express its marvellous savour?
He who has savoured it once, he knows what joy it can give.
Kabir says: "Knowing it, the ignorant man becomes wise, and the wise man becomes speechless and silent,
The worshipper is utterly inebriated,
His wisdom and his detachment are made perfect.;
He drinks from the cup of the inbreathings of love."

THE PATH OF TRUE LEARNING.

By the Japanese Sage Kaibara Ekken.

In studying the wisdom of the Sages it is imperative to have one definite aim—that of becoming a true man. The Ancients said that he who could will, could always accomplish, and that determination was half the battle. Once we have a definite aim, we become as bowmen with arrows trained on the target, or as travellers already moving towards their destination. In formulating our aims, let us be courageous rather than timid, and seek the truth even as the hungry man seeks food, the thirsty water, allowing nothing to hinder us as we press on towards the goal. Chu said: "Unless the aim be single, it cannot succeed." Then let him who ventures in the quest for true wisdom be single-minded, with the concentrataion of a setting hen or of a cat watching her prey.

Again, our aim in life should be for the highest; otherwise we shall be content with small successes and accomplish nothing worthy of mention. Aiming to become the best man in the world and working diligently with that end in view, we may in the end surpass some others. Aiming for the highest, we may reach the centre; while aiming at the centre, we shall attain the lowest. Aiming at the lowest, our end would be nowhere. Then let our aims be high, while our heart remains humble and lowly and we

accomplish small things faithfully. For if the heart be proud, little things will be neglected.

Let your learning be founded on the rock of humility. Exalt not yourself before others, but treat with respect both your friends and masters. Take delight in listening and asking questions. Be ever modest in thought and speech. Possessing this firm foundation, you will hear useful words, be able to correct your thoughts, widen your knowledge and daily grow in righteousness. Self-conceit is fatal to the acquiring of knowledge, for it prevents a man from listening to the advice of others or accepting their help. Relying on his own wisdom, he fancies he knows more than he does, and believes evil to be good—such a one gains more evil than good from the pursuit of knowledge.

Learning has two aspects, knowledge and action based on that knowledge. Learning may be compared with the eyes, and doing with the feet. Though our sight be clear, we cannot walk if our feet are paralyzed; and however strong their feet, walking is difficult to the blind. To know and not to do is as if our eyes saw the way but our feet refused to follow in it. In order of precedence knowledge comes first, but in order of importance action; for while nothing can be done without knowledge, yet knowledge not acted upon is useless.

As it is written in the Book of Chuyo, in order to advance our learning and live up to it, we must study widely, enquire minutely, think deeply, discern clearly and act faithfully. Seeing and hearing are the means of studying widely. In order to seek the truth we must read the books of the Sages, listen to the words of others and think of the past as well as of the present. The way of mankind is written in the books of the Sages, and if we read them

carefully we can distinguish black from white. The truth of the universe is infinite. Without knowing it, we often fail in our conduct. Seek first the truth which is in our hearts, then afterwards the wider truth to be gleaned from the thousands of outside things which we may make our own.

If by study, enquiry or thought, we have learned the truth, we should then put it into practice in both our speech and action. Let what we say be true and what we do discreet. Regulate the emotions, and suppress anger and selfish desires. Shake off evil and cling to good. Discovering our faults, let us not hesitate to correct them. Towards others let us be considerate. If they do not follow us, rebuke them not, but rather reflect that the fault must be ours. All this is the way of true action, and without studying and enquiring we cannot see the way clearly. Without thinking and discerning we cannot acquire the way; and without putting what we have learned into practice, it bears no fruit.

Always study yourself. Seek good friends and follow their best advice. Since the object of learning is to correct our faults, let us not be afraid to admit them, as well as our mistakes, before others. We are not Sages and we cannot always be right.

In studying a thing or a reason, we should keep our hearts cool. Also, we should not be content with stripping off one fold from the object of our study, for often below the first there are still hundreds of folds. Uncover a fold today, and uncover another tomorrow, till you see the inside of the thing. Under the skin there is flesh; under the flesh bone; and under the bone marrow. A shallow-minded person contents himself with uncovering one fold, thinking then that he has laid bare the whole.

Confucius said: "The Ancients learned for themselves, but men of today learn for others." To learn for ourselves is the true learning, while to learn for others is the ostentatious learning. The main object of learning is not to become famous, but to discipline ourselves and thus become true men. We take food in order to satisfy our hunger, not to satisfy that of others. The Sage said to Shiro: "Be thou a true scholar, and not a little scholar." By true scholar he meant a scholar who lives up to the learning of the Sages; and by the little scholar he implied a scholar who learns for his own fame and profit, without the will to live up to it.

Confucius said: "Learn and cease not until you die." Let us then continue learning and be true men as long as we can breathe.

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF RELIGION.

By S. E. Waldo.

In every science the aim is to reach a final unity. In the study of chemistry the one element into which all the rest can be resolved is what is sought. In the study of language and of ethnology, what the student is striving to discover is the root language and the original race out of which the present variety has been evolved. In every instance the attempt is made to reach a common origin for all knowledge. In religion the aim has been similar, but nearly every religion has stopped short at duality, at the idea of God and man. The Vedanta was the first of the great world philosophies to assert boldly that God and man are essentially one. Older even than Vedanta was the system of cosmology and psychology taught by the great Sage Kapila and known as the Sankhya philosophy. It is the foundation of Vedanta, which practically accepts in the

main the position of the Sankhya, but pushes its conclusions a step further and so reaches unity. It is impossible to fix any date for Kapila. He is mentioned even in the Vedas, which proves his work was known and accepted when these ancient Scriptures were composed. In fact, no system of philosophy in India antedates the Sankhya, and the proof of this is that all are plainly built on the foundation of its teaching. All accept its cosmology and its psychology.

Here in the West evolution is a doctrine which still has not won universal acceptance. Thousands still believe in a "special creation" which took place a few thousand years ago, and regard all attempts to discredit such a belief as positively impious, tending to the overthrow of the Christian religion. The conflict between science and religion is regarded by many as irrepressible and irreconcilable; and it is claimed that if one believes fully in the conclusions of science, he cannot believe in the Christian religion. In taking this position, the defenders of Christianity do not realize that they really injure their own cause. In the failure to perceive that the idea of God must of necessity evolve and enlarge with the evolution of the race, they seek to impose upon the present day a concept of Deity fitted only for a much lower stage of human progress. By this I mean that as man develops, his concept of God develops; and to force upon a highly developed man a crude concept suited to a less advanced stage is like trying to crowd a full-grown man into the garments of a child. Still, as there will always be children, suitable garments must be preserved for them; and the opposite mistake of trying to make them wear the larger habit of manhood is equally to be avoided. In other words, each must be provided for according to his needs. This is precisely the effort of Vedanta. It takes each human being just where he

stands and helps him to do his best in that position. It does not say to him, become a Christian or a Hindu or a Musselman; it simply tells him to be pure and unselfish and to strive to realize his highest ideal; the rest will follow in due time.

To return, however, to the great Sankhya system as taught by Kapila. It divided the universe into two great divisions, Souls and Nature. The whole evolution of Nature was for the purpose of giving experience to the Soul, in order that the Soul should realize its own nature and become free. Nature exists in two states, a manifested and an unmanifested state. What modern science calls evolution is the manifested state. The Sankhya calls the unmanifested state involution or a return to equilibrium. Creation is a projection from the unmanifested; and it is eternal, without beginning or end. It occurs in cycles or periods of time of inconceivably long duration; and this evolution and involution have gone on eternally and will go on this way forever. At the end of one cycle another begins. The whole cycle includes both the unmanifested and the manifested stage and is called a *Kalpa.*

The Sankhya used two names for Nature. One of these, *Prakriti,* means almost the same thing as our word Nature. The other is perhaps more scientific. It is *Avyaktam* or undifferentiated. This word also means "without vibration;" it is defined by Kapila as the "equilibrium of the three forces." These are called *Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas.* They are considered as the three sorts of material out of which all forms of manifestation are produced. *Tamas* is a force corresponding to attraction, *Rajas* to repulsion, and *Sattwa* is the balance between the two. When these two forces, attraction and repulsion, are held in perfect equipoise by *Sattwa* there is no creation, no movement. As soon as this

perfect balance is disturbed and one of these forces gets stronger than the other, then motion begins and creation or manifestation results. All this occurs periodically; there is a period of disturbance and a period of equilibrium; and these eternally succeed each other. This never-ending succession of manifestation and non-manifestation is the Sankhya doctrine of creation. When the balance between the forces is disturbed, the first manifestation is what Sankhya calls *Mahat*. This literally means "the great principle"; we call it universal intelligence. It covers all the ground of sub-consciousness, consciousness and super-consciousness. It must always be remembered that the Sankhya recognizes no difference between matter and mind save in degree. Both are substance, one coarser, the other infinitely finer, but still material.

This *Mahat* or universal intelligence changes into universal consciousness, and that in turn develops into universal fine particles and into universal organs of perception. This means that all special organs of perception are formed out of the material of universal perception. From the subtle particles, the *Tanmatras*, come the gross particles, the *Bhutas*. Thus Kapila divides the cosmos into twenty-four categories and behind them all he places a twenty-fifth, which he calls the *Purusha* or Soul. The modern idea of evolution begins with what Kapila calls the *Bhutas* or gross particles. Constant motion in the fine particles produces *Vayu*, the vibrating, which in turn produces *Tejas* or heat. This liquifies and produces *Apas* or water, and it later solidifies into *Prithivi* or earth. These stages correspond very nearly to the theory of evolution as taught in the West. It is a curious confirmation of the conclusion reached by two methods so opposite in operation that the result should be practically the same. The Western student examined the

external side, the Oriental studied the internal; but both arrived at conclusions marvellously similar as far as the material universe was concerned. The Oriental was not satisfied to stop here; he wanted a further solution, he wanted to arrive at what lay behind. He felt Nature alone was incomplete without a reason for all her efforts; and he found this reason in the necessity of the Soul's having experience, through which alone it could realize its true nature and reach liberation. Of these *Purushas* or Souls the number was infinite; and right here lies the main difference between the Sankhya and the Vedanta, which says there can be but one Soul and that the apparently infinite number of Souls are but the reflection of that One—as the one sun is reflected in millions of dewdrops.

The vast majority of men are dualists in religion, that is they teach a Deity eternally different and separate from man. Even while stating that God is omnipresent, they do not carry that idea to its literal conclusion, which is that if God is everywhere present, all is God or else there would be some place without Him and then He could not be omnipresent. At most, only a small number rise to the next conclusion—that man is a part of God, as a spark is part of the fire yet one with it. To such, God and man, while always distinct, are never separate; but the final unity is not reached until it is clearly seen that God and man and every manifested thing are one in essence. Then this universe is seen as an ever-varying panorama, the unchanging background of which is God. All is One Existence seen through name and form, which seem to change It into the wonderful variety we see. We can only know this One Existence through manifestation or limitation, so that we can never know It as It is. We are It, but can only realize this by going beyond reason and relative knowledge and

reaching what is called the superconscious state.

The Vedanta, as expounded by its great teacher Sankara, gives a very similar account of creation. It says that there is an unmanifested state, in which *Prana* and *Akasa,* primal force and matter, rest in perfect equilibrium. This balance is disturbed and *Prana* acting on *Akasa,* the result is the gradual projection of this universe. The order of the elements is first air, then fire, then water, then earth, as was the case in Kapila's system. According to both, the evolution of the microcosmos or of man proceeds in the same order as in the macrocosmos; for man is a little world in himself, duplicating all that is in the great world; and as there is a ruler directing each body, so there is a Ruler of the universe. This Ruler is called by Vedanta *Isvara,* but He does not entirely correspond to our Western idea of God. As the One Existence is beyond thought and has no attributes or qualities, it is necessary for the human mind when trying to conceive the idea of the One to do so under the limits imposed by time, space and causation. Within these limits the highest possible view that the human mind can take of the Absolute is the *Isvara*, the sum-total of the universe, from Whom it proceeds, in Whom it exists, and to Whom it returns. He is the repository of an infinite number of blessed qualities. He is the omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent Ruler of the universe. Yet no temple is ever erected to *Isvara*, only to the lesser deities who personify His attributes of Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, or *Brahma, Vishnu* and *Siva.* To them the Hindus pray, as we do to God, for various material benefits either here or hereafter, but never for salvation or final liberation. This liberation comes only when the Soul realizes its oneness with the Divine.

In the religion of the Vedanta we find many seeming

incongruities existing peacefully side by side, because we find the man of the highest spiritual development beside the man who is what we call an idolater, and yet the enlightened man is not at all disturbed by the fact that his brother has not yet reached to the same heights as himself. Why is this? The answer is simple: — because the highly developed man sees in his idol-worshipping brother one who is on the way to the highest, just as the most learned college professor sees in his baby son a possible future successor to all his honors and never dreams of blaming the little one because he has not attained the goal.

The idea of evolution,—that men are in various stages of development and must be treated accordingly, combined with the recognition of the essential unity of all existence, is the element that binds the varying aspects of religion into one great whole. Vedanta alone, of all the great philosophies, says that all the different religions that are in the world are only so many different roads to the one goal, to that One Existence called by so many names. We find in the world two opposing opinions. One says everything is change, a constant flux with nothing permanent; and the other says that behind all this ever-changing flow of existence there is an unchanging eternal reality. The harmonizing of these opposite views is accomplished by the non-dualists or Advaitists in Vedanta. They say that each is right according to the point of view taken. As long as there are two things, the seen and the seer, only ceaseless change can appear. In reality, however, there is both change and changelessness in the universe. Change can only appear to that which does not change. Unless you stand still on a bank you cannot perceive the movement of the current of a river. Taken as a unit, there can be no motion in the universe because motion is relative; one

thing seems to move in relation to some other thing that is either at rest or in motion at a different rate of speed. If then we conceive the entire universe as a single whole, how can there be any motion? In comparison with what can it be said to move? So with what we call the body, mind and Soul: they are not separate existences, but three phases of one existence. He who sees the body does not see the mind; and when he sees the mind he does not see the Soul. For the man who sees the Soul, both body and mind have vanished. To use the famous Indian simile of the rope and the snake: both cannot be seen at once. While the rope is mistaken for the snake, not the least idea of rope can be in the mind; and when the rope is seen as rope, the snake cannot be seen at all. Yet there are not two things but only one.

The Self or Soul is all that exists, but seen through the veil of name and form, it appears to be many. While we see the many, we do not see the Self; but when the Self is realized, the many have disappeared. The wave is nothing different from the ocean. The form taken for a moment by the water, we call a wave; but it can never be separated from the sea. The sea exists always, whether there are waves or not; but no wave could appear for an instant but for the sea. All existence as we know it, that is, all manifested existences are but waves upon the ocean of Absolute Existence. Seen as waves, there is only endless change; but seem as the ocean itself, there is one eternal whole. Modern science has shown that matter is really one unbroken ocean, constantly changing in configuration. A particle of matter that is in one being today, may be next month in a plant and later in an animal. Every particle of matter is constantly changing its position, just as do the drops in the ocean; and all the forms we see are like so

many waves appearing on this ocean of matter. We give them names and call the different points the sun, the moon the stars, men, animals, plants, etc., but in reality there is but one never-changing mass of matter.

The same is true of the mind, which is only matter in a finer form. And the Soul is likewise one, but It is Unchangeable, Unbroken, Absolute Being. It is the eternal Witness of the Universe, before whom turn the leaves of the book of life; the Soul never comes and never goes. The Self is omnipresent. This is the teaching of the non-dualist. Thus the Vedanta declares that underlying and embracing all forms of religion is Religion itself; and this is not talk, not theory, not doctrines, but realization. "It is being and becoming, not hearing or acknowledging. It is not intellectual assent, but the whole nature becoming changed into it. That is religion." All the varying forms of religion are but so many attempts to reach the one Goal; and this can only be the final unit Existence, the One without a second, the Self.

THE STEADFAST TITTIBHAS.

Rendered from a Sanskrit Parable.

There once lived a pair of Tittibhas on the surf-hardened beach of an Ocean. The male bird, confident of his own strength, set the great Ocean at naught and took his wife away, leaving their newly-laid eggs on the sands. The fearful mother-bird vainly begged and protested. "Do not be anxious, my dear," he said. "If the foolish Ocean is so daring as to carry off our eggs, I shall punish the insolent fellow by depriving him of all his surging waters. You will see how he will tremble before me." "Tremble before you?" said the wife. "What are you compared with the Ocean?" The male Tittibha paid no heed to her words,

but spread his wings and called to her to come and look for food.

The Ocean overheard their conversation and when they were gone, he rolled his angry waves up the beach and swept their eggs into the surf. But he was by nature thoughtful and he said to himself: "I am not quite sure who this Tittibha may be, what his position, to whom he may appeal. Therefore I will hide his eggs in a safe place and wait." When the Tittibhas returned, full fed, their eggs were missing. Then the male bird, hot with indignation, ruffled his feathers and hopped noisily back and forth, sternly resolved to dry up the Ocean. His wife looked at him terrified. "What are you," she said, "a small creature born of an egg, compared with the mighty Ocean? How dare you plunge into a struggle with one so strong? Enmity is fitting only among equals. You and the Ocean are not equals. Your body is but sixteen inches long and your wings scare a foot across. Your legs are like the stem of the mango fruit and your beak is like the kusa grass. Friends you have none except myself, a poor helpless creature. You can fly in the air barely the distance of an arrow's flight. By birth you are a Tittibha, the meanest of the oviparous race. But the Ocean is a million miles long one way and two million miles the other and he is as deep as the earth itself. He holds within him quite as many beings as there are on earth and he hoards precious gems of countless worth. Among his friends may be reckoned the *Devas* and *Munis* (holy men) of rigid austerity. He has even given refuge to lofty mountains, such as Mainaka, when they fled from Indra's wrath. Compare yourself with such a foe. Do not thus tempt ruin. Already by your foolhardiness we have lost our children. Add not further to my misery by your death."

The male bird's eyes grew red with anger and each feather stood erect. Gazing sternly at his wife, he said: "In times of prosperity friends are to be found in plenty, but that one is a true friend who remains loyal in adversity. Whoso forsaketh at the hour of need is an enemy, whether it be son or wife or parent. He alone is a friend who never wavers in virtue or sin, in happiness or misfortune. That one who seeks success in life should slay first the enemy who is disguised as a friend, and then the open foe. But I have lived long and happily with you, how can I now injure you? No. All I ask is that you leave me. Tarry no longer near. Alone and by my own might I will dry up the Ocean." Thus saying, he flew into the air and began to work. The hen-Tittibha, seeing his resolve and ashamed of her unwifely behaviour, came to his aid; and all day and night they toiled, dipping their beaks and throwing water into the air; but still the Ocean seemed as full. Then fellow Tittibhas came and laughed to scorn their foolish efforts. "Either help or go away," the tireless couple called. Shamed in their turn by the courage of the little birds, they too joined; and so with others, until the entire race of feathered things was assisting them. At last the holy sage Narada passed and tried again to dissuade them from their apparently unreasoning task. But they would not listen. Seeing them so steadfast and firm in their resolve, he admonished them to invoke the aid of Garuda. At the very sight of the fierce Garuda the Ocean trembled and restored the eggs of the Tittibhas.

Thus untired should man work at the subjugation of his mind. If he will but make a firm resolve, then will God come to his aid as did Garuda to the brave Tittibhas. Help never fails those who persist in righteous action. That one can achieve all things who possesses manliness, self-con-

trol, courage, strength and skill. Just as the lion never retraces his steps when once he has begun his march, so he who engages in the subjugation of his mind should never turn back even in the face of a deadly foe. Thus say the Scriptures: "Like the emptying of the ocean by the tip of a blade of Kusa grass, drop by drop, so has the restraint of the mind to be achieved without weariness."

REPORTS.

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston the chief event of the month was the Christmas celebration, which took place on Sunday, the 23rd. At the morning Service, the subject of the Address by Swami Paramananda was "The Practice of the Christ-Ideal;" and in the evening at 5 o'clock the regular devotional service was extended and made the real Christmas Eve celebration. The usual altar to the Christ Child in the corner window of the house was lighted with many candles and the Chapel itself was trimmed with flowers and evergreens. Besides music by the regular organist, Senor Blanchart and Senorita Blanchart sang several sacred songs with deep fervor and devotion. The Swami gave a short address in which he layed emphasis on the need of manifesting the Christ consciousness in our daily life throughout the year, if we would taste the true Christ joy at the Christmastide.

The religious celebration on Sunday was followed on Christmas day by an informal reception to all the students and friends of the work, an especial effort being made to reach those who were alone and away from their home and friends. There was a tree in the Community House and refreshments were served throughout the afternoon.

The Centre will celebrate the ninth anniversary of its foundation on Tuesday evening, January 1st, at 8 o'clock. All the friends of the Centre are cordially invited to be present.

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The Message of the East

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE VALUE OF NON-ATTACHMENT.

By Swami Paramananda.

Serenity of heart is attained when all the blemishes are wiped out of our nature through the subjugation of self. Only when we have succeeded in eliminating all worldly impressions and no longer allow our mind to cling to the non-essential, can we attain perfect tranquillity; and we do this through the practice of non-attachment. For this reason non-attachment forms one of the most vital factors in our spiritual path. In order to gain it people subject themselves to rigid austerities and sacrifices. But these do not always lead to detachment. Often we find as much attachment in a beggar as in a prince. It is not a question of many possessions or few. Non-attachment is a quality of mind and has very little to do with external conditions. Through a momentary impulse due to unhappy circumstances we may tear ourselves away from our association and environment; but even by doing this, we are not able to break the tie which binds us to them. The outer renunciation of earthly things does not liberate us from the hold they have upon our mind.

We usually imagine that we feel attachment only for what is pleasing to us, but in reality aversion binds us as much as desire. It is sometimes even more difficult to

free ourselves from unpleasant impressions than from pleasant ones. There are certain blunders, hasty words, unworthy acts, which leave a bad taste in our memory and we would like to forget them; but we seem powerless to do so, because our mind stubbornly clings to them. Often, too, we recognize something plainly detrimental to our progress, yet we are unable to drive it out of our thought. Another mistake we frequently make is to suppose that there cannot be any true love without strong attachment. In reality, however, they are totally different in nature and produce contrary results on our character. Attachment contracts, love expands. Attachment calls out all the baser selfish instincts. We are attached because of the gratification it brings us, with only a secondary thought for the happiness and well-being of the one to whom we are attached. Love, on the other hand, makes us absolutely forgetful of our own self-interest or satisfaction and thinks only of the loved one. It gives perfect freedom, while attachment creates slavery both for us and for the one to whom we bear attachment. Love gives for the joy of giving, attachment gives for the return that may come.

Those who have a perfect understanding of the spiritual life declare that attachment in any form is a great drawback; and if we wish to advance in the spiritual path, we must practise non-attachment towards all these worldly impressions, associations and possessions, to which at present we cling through sheer force of habit. By this, however, is meant an inner practice rather than an outer act of renunciation. It is a question of creating new impressions in the mind. If our present impressions have proved unsatisfactory and hostile to our progress, then we must take a stand against them. We do this and no more. We must not fight them, but we must go to work and create a totally new set of impressions.

The ego is our greatest enemy in accomplishing this. It constantly produces delusion in our mind. Yet if it is helpful to us, we do not want to destroy it. What we want is to reshape it. We want a better form of ego. This is the idea of all discipline. The only way we can conquer this subtle force is to hold ourselves as the witness. If we can imagine standing on the bank of a river, seeing the water flow by, so we should watch all impressions pass without being disturbed by them. The ordinary tendency is when someone strikes, to strike back; but this is not the case with a masterful mind. It is not that he lacks in sensibility, but these things do not move him; he has, as it were, put on an armor of fortitude and calmness.

The practice of detachment includes two distinct processes, — withdrawing and indrawing. We must withdraw ourselves from whatever retards our unfoldment; then create a strong new spiritual impression by turning our thought within. At present we are all slaves to certain habits; in order to overcome these we must cultivate another habit, which in time will become so dominant that it will efface the old ones. All our out-going tendencies, which now hold us back, must be detached from the non-essential and then drawn inward. But this is only possible through superior knowledge. If we try to do violence to our mind by a sudden uprooting of the old impressions, it suffers; but if we first acquire a correct knowledge of the relative value of things, the mind itself lets go without any pang. First we analyze, discriminate and try to see everything in its true light; then as the mind gradually detaches itself from the old impression, we turn it inward and fix it on some spiritual object. As we do this, our heart becomes more and more liberated from mundane things and finds its sole delight in God.

HYMN OF PRAISE.

From the Srimad-Bhagavatam.

Salutation to that Adorable One Who endows all beings with consciousness; Who is the Soul of the Universe; Who constitutes the germ of all creation and Who is the Supreme Lord. Let us meditate upon Him.

I take refuge with that self-created One, in Whom is established this (universe); from Whom it has sprung; by Whom it was created; and Who is the basis of it, yet Who is not bound by cause and effect.

Salutation unto the Highest Lord; unto Brahman, the Supreme; unto Him of infinite power; Who is without form, yet Who wears countless forms; and unto Him of wondrous works.

Salutation unto Him, Who is the Light and Guide of the Soul, the Witness, the Supreme Spirit.

Salutation unto Him, Who is the ever-peaceful one; Whose acts are law, Who is without any shadow of difference, Who is ever the same, Who is Supreme Intelligence.

Salutation unto Thee, Who art the Soul of all, the Sovereign Ruler of all, the Witness, the Great Self, the Origin of Souls, and the Source of Nature herself.

Salutation unto Thee, who art the Cause of all, yet Thyself causeless; Who art the Source of the Vedas (Scriptures), the Mighty Ocean, the Bestower of emancipation, and the Great Refuge of all creatures.

Salutation unto Thee, Who severest the yoke of ignorance of such humble devotees as myself; from Whom cometh liberation; the Fountain of unlimited mercy, Who art never idle; Who art the inner-Soul within the hearts of all, directing their thoughts and actions in accordance with their Karma.

Salutation unto Thee, the might of Whose threefold Divine force is irresistible; Who dost manifest Thyself as the form of sense objects; the Protector of all who take refuge in Thee; of transcendental power and glory; Whose way is unattainable by those who are bent upon the enjoyment of worldly pleasures.

WHAT IS THIS WORLD?

By Ali Ghazzali.

(Persian moralist and philosopher, 11th century.)

This world is a stage or market-place passed by pilgrims on their way to the next. It is here that they are to provide themselves with provisions for the way; or, to put it plainly, man acquires here by the use of his bodily senses some knowledge of the works of God and through them of God Himself, the sight of Whom will constitute his future beatitude. It is for the acquirement of this knowledge that the spirit of man has descended into this world of water and clay.

While man is in this world, two things are necessary for him:—First, the protection and nurture of his Soul; secondly, the care and nurture of his body. The proper nourishment of the Soul, as above shown, is the knowledge and love of God; and to be absorbed in the love of anything but God is the ruin of the Soul. The body, so to speak, is simply the riding animal of the Soul and perishes, while the Soul endures. The Soul should take care of the body, just as a pilgrim on his way to Mecca takes care of his camel; but if the pilgrim spends his whole time in feeding and adorning his camel, the caravan will leave him behind and he will perish in the desert.

Man's bodily needs are simple, being comprised under three heads,—food, clothing and a dwelling-place; but the bodily desires, which are implanted in him with a view to

procuring these, are apt to rebel against reason, which is of later growth than they. Accordingly, as we saw above, they require to be curbed and restrained by the Divine laws promulgated by the prophets.

The occupations and businesses of the world have become more and more complicated and troublesome chiefly owing to the fact that men have forgotten that their real necessities are only three — clothing, food and shelter; and that these exist only with the object of making the body a fit vehicle for the Soul in its journey towards the next world. They have fallen into the same mistake as the pilgrim to Mecca, mentioned above, who, forgetting the object of his pilgrimage and himself, should spend his whole time in feeding and adorning his camel. The deceitful character of the world comes out in the following ways. In the first place it pretends that it will always remain with you, while as a matter of fact it is slipping away from you moment by moment and bidding you farewell, like a shadow which seems stationary but is actually always moving.

Another dangerous property of worldly things is that they at first appear as mere trifles, but each of these so-called "trifles" branches out into countless ramifications, until they swallow up the whole of a man's time and energy. Jesus (on whom be peace!) said: "The lover of the world is like a man drinking sea-water; the more he drinks the more thirsty he gets, till at last he perishes with thirst unquenched." The Prophet said: "You can no more mix with the world without being contaminated by it, than you can go into water without getting wet."

The world is like a table spread for successive relays of guests who come and go. There are gold and silver dishes, abundance of food and perfumes. The wise guest eats as much as is sufficient for him, smells the perfumes, thanks

his host, and departs. The foolish guest, on the other hand, tries to carry off some of the gold and silver dishes, only to find them wrenched out of his hands and himself thrust forth, disappointed and disgraced.

Although we have said so much against the world, it must be remembered that there are some things in the world which are not *of* it, such as knowledge and good deeds. A man carries what knowledge he possesses with him into the next world; and though his good deeds have passed, yet the effect of them remains in his character. Especially is this the case with acts of devotion, which result in the perpetual remembrance and love of God. These are among "those good things" which, as the Koran says, "pass not away."

THE SECRET OF RIGHT ACTIVITY.

Lecture by Sister Devamata.

As we watch the endless multiplication of machines and all the intricate apparatus of modern life, we see that in nearly every case the aim is to save labor. Man's ambition apparently is to invent a machine that will live for him, work for him, earn for him, while he sits by and merely turns a lever or pushes a button. Curiously enough, however, while he is thus intent on saving labor, he never thinks of saving life itself. For every hour spared in physical effort, he is increasing his needs, whetting his desires, accelerating the momentum of his daily living, over-reaching himself in countless ways, and as the harvest of it all reaping disappointment and exhaustion. If he could apply the same ingenuity and power of invention to the bigger problem of life, instead of to bodily activity only, he would save labor not only for a few hours in the day, but for eternity. It was to teach man this secret that those Seers of old, seated in seeming inaction on the heights of the Hima-

layas, evolved the practical system of Karma-Yoga or the science of right activity. How can man make each action bring its full equivalent? How can he perform each task with a minimum loss of energy? These were the questions for which they sought and found answers.

There can be no such thing as inactivity on the plane of manifestation, they taught. Activity may become gross or fine, it may be outer or inner; but living itself means action. The heart never stops, or the lungs; all the subconscious forces of our body are ceaselessly active. It is evident then that as human beings we have no choice between action and inaction; we may only determine the nature of our activity. Proper direction and conservation of energy become therefore the two primary lessons of life. Man should economize his inner forces as carefully as he seeks to save steam or electricity. Wise living is at bottom a problem in mechanics,— how to prevent waste and to reduce friction. Are we trying to make our life move with less and less friction? Are we utilizing every ounce of energy to some vital end? By such questionings should we challenge each rising impulse towards action.

At present we live in the comparative degree:—Is this better or wiser or higher? We should go a step further and live in the superlative:—Is this best, wisest, highest? There is a "best" at every moment:—a best way to wake up and to fall asleep, a best way to work, a best way to play, a best way to expend each hour of living. If we wake heavy, drowsy, longing for more sleep, we begin the day with the sub-conscious or lower brute self uppermost. We should train ourselves, by holding the proper thought as we fall asleep at night, to waken with the feeling of the privilege of life, the privilege of work, the wealth of the hours before us. As soon as we form the habit of waking in this attitude of

mind, we shall rise alert, strong, rested. So with each act of life; it must seem a privilege, rich in opportunity for higher attainment and service. Then there will be no division in our thought, hence no fricton or waste.

In our present scattered, nervous way of living, we expend at least fifty per cent more energy in every act than we need. The course of our day is not unlike that of a dog along a country road. In one mile he covers three, because he has no direct purpose in his zigzag search. We must learn to make straight across our day by having a single purpose in our mind. Perfect single-mindedness implies a dominant aim in life; but it also means that we should try to hold our entire thought on the task in hand, never letting it wander to what has gone before or to what is coming after. This is the secret of all efficiency — one thing at a time. Watch any great man at work and you will see how absolutely his energy is centred on what he is doing; it is almost impossible to divert his attention. The average thought is seldom fixed; it runs back and forth across the main line of activity. Is the task pleasant or unpleasant? Will it succeed or fail? Is it worth while? So it calculates and measures and questions and wastes energy; for every useless thought means leakage and decrease of power. The wise man cares little about the nature of his work; for him there is no difference between task and task, one is not irksome and another agreeable; he is wholly concerned with the force which works — that it may be used to the greatest possible advantage and to the largest end.

The quickest way to arrive at this point of view, Vedanta says, is to detach our mind from all anxiety regarding the results of our action. In nothing do we spend so much futile energy as in calculating, while we work, the outcome of

our effort. By that divided line of thought we inevitably reduce the result; and the more we waste energy in calculating, the smaller must it be. If a man stops every little while to measure the amount of ground he has covered, it will take him long to make his journey. We should put the whole of ourself into our work and let the result take care of itself. There is no surer method of gaining the largest result. It is not possible for any effort to be fruitless, for there can be no action without a reaction of equal strength and similar nature. The more centred the act, therefore, the stronger and more productive must be the reaction. Even should it fall short of our hopes, we shall spare ourselves needless suffering and regret if we keep our attention fixed on what we put into each act rather than on what we get out of it. Every disappointment borne cheerfully means so much energy saved for a future and more effective action. Life is like any other game; if a man plays, not to play well, but to win, he nearly always grows irritable and loses both his temper and the game. The good player maintains his poise under all circumstances and is intent only on the perfection of each stroke. The Gita teaches us this when it tells us that the first lesson in Yoga or spiritual practice is even-mindedness; and the second is skillfulness in action.

Not one of us is really weak, not one is incapable of great results in life. We do not know ourselves—what dynamos of power we are; what mighty things we might achieve, if we would only gather up all our energies and make the wisest use of them. We can do this only as we readjust our scale of values and put them on a sounder basis. Now we squander our vital forces because we lend importance to trivial things, which fail us as soon as we gain them, and then we must begin again. Also we imagine that our hap-

piness and greatness rest on outer circumstances and we strain every nerve to alter them. But what matters it if we are here or there? As soon as we enlarge our standard of measurement, it will not count at all. One spot or another, it is all on the same earth, revolving about the same sun, part of the same universe, governed by the same laws.

What differentiates man from man then? His own will. And what makes the difference between will and will? The Ideal and the faith with which it is served. That is all. Get a high Ideal and relate yourself to it, at once your will will grow stronger. If we try to run our little machine as an isolated mechanism, it will run down every few moments; but if we keep it connected with the power centre, it becomes inexhaustible; and it is by our thought that we connect ourselves. It is not the size of a machine that is of first importance; it is the perfection of its adjustment and the skill with which it is directed. People used to think that a big tree needed a big saw; now they have discovered that a fine saw moved at high speed cuts better. It is not a question of whether we have great gifts or small, whether we are in a place of importance or an obscure corner; it is a question of moving steadily, calmly, with fixed determination towards a lofty goal. When we can do this, our life must be fruitful for ourself and for the world.

Let us realize our possibilities and begin to develop them. It requires no special equipment, no peculiar set of circumstances. Every man must act. We cannot help it. We cannot stop it. "Not even for a moment does anyone remain inactive," the Bhagavad-Gita declares. Such being the case, how can we make this activity count? Now we are the slaves of action, let us learn to be masters. Wherever and whatever we may be, let us set out from this day to be the finest sort of person we can be and lead the highest

kind of life. Nobility of character needs no external name or condition to ennoble it. Let the humblest man serve a lofty Ideal with steadfast devotion and he glorifies himself and his condition. The secret is less in what we do or what we are, than in what we serve. Is God the pivot of every action? Then we are safe. We cannot work to small ends. That Power which keeps the earth moving round the sun and that again round a bigger sun, will keep us too swinging in our proper orbit in harmony with the universal plan.

We only live and breathe and act because we are connected with the Ultimate Source of life and action. Apart from it we are as helpless as are the great wheels in a power-house when the engine stops. But as every bolt and belt and piston is necessary to that engine; so have we a vital part in the universal scheme; and we shall fulfill that part only when we remain in constant union with the Central Power. Now we refer all things to our little self; we must learn to refer all things to Him. Every thought of petty personal gain or loss, pleasure or pain, honor or dishonor, must be swallowed up in the consuming thought of God. Whatever leads us towards Him will be accounted gain, even though it rob us of every worldly advantage; whatever takes us from Him will be a loss, though it set us in the highest place. Nor will our life grow less joyous when we adopt this new standard of action. When we walk towards the sun, all is radiance; it is only when we turn away that we see our shadow. The man who faces towards God as he works, as he plays, as he rests, is always glad-hearted, whatever the day's labor may bring him; and only the happy-hearted man does his work well.

Discontent, envy, doubt, selfish ambition, these are the causes of all friction and waste; and they can be eradicated

only by broadening our vision. We must regard ourselves not as isolated entities living a little life of our own, but as parts of a great whole with a universal mission. No ambition we can hold for ourselves can be so far-reaching as that which God holds for us. We merely limit our possibilities for achievement whenever we set a definite end for our action. When we shall learn on the contrary to yield ourselves up to His larger plan, then the beauty that is the sunset or the sunrise, the strength that is in the wind, the love that is in a Christ's heart, the wisdom that keeps all created things moving in perfect order and harmony, each according to its nature and purpose: these will manifest through us and we shall become mighty channels through which the Infinite will accomplish His perfect work.

THE SUPERIOR MAN.

Texts of Confucianism.

The superior man, acting in accordance with the state of equilibrium and harmony, may be all unknown and unregarded by the world, but he feels no regret.

The way of the superior man reaches far and wide, and yet is secret.

That wherein the superior man cannot be equalled is simply this,—his (work) which other men do not see. Therefore the superior man, even when he is not acting, has the feeling of reverence; and when he does not speak, he has the feeling of truthfulness.

A superior man keeps his speech under control, while the small man is forward to speak.

The superior man exalts others and abases himself; he gives the first place to others and takes the last himself.

The superior man will decline a position of high honor, but not one that is lowly; and riches, but not poverty.

Hence the superior man, rather than have his emoluments superior to his worth, will have his worth superior to his emoluments.

The superior man does what is proper to the position in which he is, he does not want to go beyond it. In a position of wealth and honor, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honor. In a position of poverty and lowliness, he does what is proper to a position of poverty and lowliness. The superior man can find himself in no position in which he is not himself.

In a high situation he does not insult or oppress those who are below him; in a low position he does not cling to or depend on those who are above him. He rectifies himself and seeks for nothing from others; and thus none feel dissatisfied with him. Above, he does not murmur against Heaven; below, he does not find fault with men. When occupying a high position he is not proud, and in a low position he is not insubordinate.

Therefore the superior man lives quietly and calmly, waiting for the appointments of Heaven; while the ordinary man does what is full of risk, looking out for the turns of luck.

The Master said: "In archery we have something like the way of the superior man. When the archer misses the centre of the target, he turns round and seeks for the cause of the failure in himself."

The superior man internally examines his heart, that there may be nothing wrong there and no occasion for dissatisfaction with himself.

The course of the superior man is rooted in his own character and conduct.

The superior man considers perfection as the noblest of all attainments. He who is perfect not only completes

himself, his perfection enables him to complete all other beings also. The completion of himself shows the complete virtue of his nature, the completion of other beings shows his wisdom.

LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF WAR IN ANCIENT INDIA.

By Prof. Bal Krishna, M. A., F. S. S.

What about the morality of war in the civilized nations of the ancient world? Civilized China, Egypt, Carthage, Persia, Greece, Rome and Assyria show no more humanity and morality in their palmy days than uncivilized Europe in the dark Mediaeval Ages. From the Homeric age down to the Roman conquest of Greece there is one horrible story to be told in this respect. Guile, treachery, cunning, falsehood, relentless cruelty, unrestrained ferocity, extreme brutality, inhuman barbarity; indiscriminate pillage, slaughter and conflagation; in short, savagery and vandalism were the morality of the day. Then the whole Roman Empire was actually watered with the blood of the martyrs and captives of war. Slavery was the foundation of both civilizations. Without this institution, so eloquently defended by that great philosopher, Aristotle, the Greek and Roman civilizations could never have seen the light of day. But is there anything of the kind to be found in ancient India?

It can be said on the unimpeachable authority of the Greek historians themselves that we made no captives in war, nor had any slaves, native or foreign, in our midst. Magasthenes, Arrian and Strabo have all testified to the truth of this assertion. Then in India belligerents had no license to ruthlessly butcher one another and win victories by every means, fair and foul; but they had to observe

many restrictions which did not allow them to transgress the bounds of morality, sympathy or humanity. War was looked upon as a contest of arms for securing peace, justice or redress of grievances; although a necessary evil, it was humanized. Cunning, treachery, unnecessary pain were against the rules of a fair warfare. Hence the fighting armies were prohibited by the great primeval law-giver and the first patriarch, Manu, to employ (a) weapons concealed in wood for treacherously killing the foe; (b) barbed arms; (c) poisoned arms; (d) weapons whose points were blazing with fire.

But it can be said that the present redaction of the Manava-Dharma-Shastra is not very old. It does not carry us far enough into the realms of antiquity. Justly so; let us go to the Sutra period. There, curiously enough, we find the same thing recorded in the Baudhayana Sutras. Thus this passage is not only a valuable historic proof of the prohibition, but also of the previous existence of poisoned arms and of fire-arms among the Indians of the 5th century B. C. Stranger still that an outright condemnation of poisoned arms is to be seen in the Ramayana. Meghnad is charged with the violation of the rules of fair fighting when he threw his poisoned javelin at Laksmana. It should be noted, however, that the use of guns, cannons and other machines was not against the rules of just warfare. Sukra has given instructions for their employment. "One should commence fighting," he says, "by placing fire-arms, both light and heavy, in the front; but the war with mechanical instruments leads to great destruction in which balls are flung by the application of gunpowder in cylindrical fire-arms."

"Persons equally circumstanced must encounter each other, fighting fairly. A car warrior should have a car-

warrior for his antagonist; he on the neck of an elephant should have a similar combatant for a foe; a horse should be met by a horse; and a foot soldier, O Bharata, should be met by a foot soldier. Guided by considerations of fitness, willingness, daring and might, one should strike another, giving notice. No one should strike another that is unprepared, or panic-stricken. One engaged with another, one seeking quarter, one retreating, one whose weapon is rendered unfit, one uncased in mail should never be struck. Car-drivers, animals (yoked to cars or carrying weapons), men engaged in the transport of weapons, players on drums and blowers of conchs should never be struck." Such are the highly interesting covenants made by the Kurus and Pandavas (at least 1400 B. C.). They reveal a very high degree of civilization, a deep regard for humanity and a laudable spirit of fair fighting. The Hague Conferences have not yet agreed to embody such humane regulations in their military codes. But here an important question crops up — whether the above rules were ever observed in actual practice? Certain rules were occasionally violated in the great Kurukshetra war, but every such occasion provokes an indignant condemnation from all the leaders.

Pillage and capricious demolishment of buildings were altogether prohibited. The whole unfighting population was to be religiously spared and promises of safety were to be proclaimed by various means. The victor was to inspire confidence among the conquered, declaring that he would protect them like his children, that they were like his own subjects. The conqueror was to find out the best means of gratifying his subjects. He was to win over the educated classes by honoring the righteous Brahmins; by worshipping the gods and lightening the taxes of the peo-

ple; by making authoritative their customs, laws and family practices; and finally by honoring the new king and his councillors with precious gifts. According to the *Agni-Purana:* "A king should treat a prisoner of war, ransomed and liberated, as his own begotten son. A defeated enemy should not be fought again, and the victor should maintain and honor the customs and usages of the country newly added to his kingdom."

The rules for the pacification of a conquered territory have been most brilliantly formulated in Kautilya's *Artha-Shastra:* "Having acquired a new territory, he (the conqueror) should cover the enemies' vices with his own virtues, and the enemies' virtues by doubling his own virtues, by strict obesrvance of his own duties, by attending to his works, by bestowing rewards, by remitting taxes, by giving gifts and by bestowing honors. He should follow the friends and leaders of the people. He should adopt the same mode of life, the same dress, language and customs of the people. He should follow the people in their faith, with which they celebrate their national religious and congregational festivals or amusements."

(Extract from contribution to Calcutta University Magazine.)

In connection with Professor Bal Krishna's article, it is interesting to note certain ancient passages bearing on the same subject. The *Agni- Purana* declares: "The king should protect his own army and worship the guardian deities of the places occupied by it in the enemy's domain, and should take special care in order that they may not be in the least insulted by an infuriated soldiery; or that their temples or the properties dedicated to their enjoyment be in the least molested in any way." Manu and the ancient authorities clearly forbid the confiscation or wilful destruc-

tion of the property of hostile subjects; and a study of the Law Codes of ancient India makes plain that the chief object of war was not to extend the territory of the conquerors by annexation, or to enrich the conquering army, but to re-establish certain lawful rights. In the Ramayana, when Rama overpowers Ravana, not a single member of the victorious army was allowed to enter the capitol of Lanka; and when even Rama himself sends a messenger, he charges him to gain the permission of Bibishana, Ravana's brother, before proceeding on his way. In the *Shanti-Parva* we read: "Brihaspati has said that a king possessed of intelligence should always avoid war for the acquisition of territory." And this is corroborated by Arrian: "A sense of justice, they say, prevented any Indian king from attempting conquest beyond the limits of India."

Megasthenes, Greek ambassador to the court of the Hindu ruler, Chandra-Gupta (319 B. C.), thus testifies to the high standard of morality prevailing among the Indo-Aryans: "There are usages observed by the Indians which contribute to prevent the recurrence of famine among them; for wherever among other nations it is usual in the contests of war to ravage the soil and thus to reduce it to an uncultivated waste; among the Indians, on the contrary, by whom husbandmen are regarded as a class that is sacred and inviolable, the tillers of the soil, even when a battle is raging in their neighborhood, are undisturbed by any sense of danger; for the combatants on either side in waging the conflict make carnage of each other, but allow those engaged in husbandry to remain quite unmolested. Besides, they neither ravage an enemy's land with fire, nor cut down its trees. Nor would an enemy, coming upon a husbandman at work on his land, do him harm; for the men of his class being regarded as public benefactors, are protected from all injury."

NINTH ANNIVERSARY

of the Vedanta Centre of Boston.

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated the Ninth Anniversary of its establishment on the evening of January 1st. Despite the bitterly cold weather nearly one hundred friends were present. The exercises began with a song, delightfully rendered, by Senor Blanchart. Swami Paramananda then rose and delivered an opening address, in which he said:

"We have gathered here this evening to celebrate the Ninth Anniversary of this work. The birth of an individual is always sacred; but the birth of an institution, which exists for the sake of many and for the upliftment of many, is doubly sacred. There is no doubt that the whole world is passing through a bitter crisis, and more than ever does it stand in need of a spiritualizing influence. Never has there been a greater necessity for understanding and unity, and these are the fundamental ideals of the Centre. Its object is not only to create unity between East and West, but between nation and nation, race and race, man and man, even where there is no apparent basis of sympathy or harmony. It recognizes before all else the common heritage of all living beings as related to the One Supreme Cosmic Being. This work has been established, not to introduce a new creed or to enter into rivalry with existing creeds, but to provide a place of non-sectarian worship where the followers of all creeds may find peace and spiritual blessing. When I first came to Boston I did not dream of establishing a permanent work here; I came because I had something in my heart, the same thing which had brought me all the way from India,—an earnest desire to share with others the message of love, unity and tolerance which lies at the root of all Vedanta teaching; for what

I voice is not personal, it is what India has voiced from time immemorial.

"We are now beginning the tenth season of our work, so we have come together to ask anew the Grace of God and the good will of people. If the work has gained strength, it is because of the desire and sincerity of you, the friends and students of the Centre, who come here so faithfully — not because you find a new religion, but rather because you gain a more comprehensive and unifying presentation of already familiar truths. The Centre does not lay claim to any monopoly of Truth; what it is trying to do is to give its share to humanity at large. Our work may be humble, but what we stand for is of God. We try to represent the Universal Spirit, which recognizes no race or creed. What we stand for is absence of sectarian hatred, absence of creed-bound prejudice. The inscription on this altar—"Truth is one, men call It by various names" —this is the spirit we hold close to our hearts, and this is the spirit we would give to others. We have no thought to make people embrace an alien faith; our sole effort is to make them feel the value and joy of true spiritual living. No one can ever hope to accomplish anything great without spiritual strength and spontaneity of heart. We celebrate this Anniversary every year to remind ourselves of our duty. Are we lacking in any way in the work we have undertaken? Have we ever failed to sound the note of tolerance and love? If so, you must tell us."

At the close of his address, the Swami called upon Sister Devamata to give a review of the year's work. "In the Indian Sacred Writings," she began, "we are given a picture of the great Sankara as a youth of sixteen, seated beneath a tree by the roadside; a white-haired disciple approaches and asks certain questions. The teacher re-

mains silent, yet after a time the aged man rises and goes on his way with all his questions answered. So must it be in a measure when one is asked to review a spiritual work. In the silence alone can the record be found. For who knows where the Spirit goes? Who knows what the Spirit does? We stand here as a Centre, but we can tell nothing of the ever-widening circles that are being drawn around it. One earnest seeker may come; and the thought impinging on his or her heart may give a new impetus to another, and so on and on. The surface activity represents the smallest part of the work; yet of that only can we take definite account. During the past year the Boston Centre has gone steadily on despite the difficult conditions which prevail everywhere. The Services and Classes have continued without interruption and the average attendance has been maintained — being somewhat higher than usual through the summer. Swami Paramananda has divided his time equally between Los Angeles and Boston, having spent six months at each Centre. The Los Angeles work, as you know, was definitely established in 1916. The Swami had given a previous course of lectures there in August, 1915, during his first journey to the Pacific Coast; this had led under urgent pressure to a second visit the following summer, which culminated in the formation of a Centre. The Swami spent the early part of 1917 in Los Angeles; and after his return to Boston in March our secretary, Miss Sherwood, was left in charge until I was sent at the end of April. A course of nine public lectures with bi-weekly classes held me there until the close of June.

"Swami returned to the West in July and began a series of public lectures, besides the usual bi-weekly classes, which carried him through October. He had gone with the thought of discontinuing the work for a time at

least, but at all the meetings the attendance was so large and the enthusiasm so great that he was obliged to abandon the idea. 'It does not seem right to throw all this earnest interest away,' he wrote. Besides the regular teaching, he was invited to speak before various organizations and to deliver a course of three lectures in San Diego. Also here in Boston and elsewhere there have been calls for outside lectures.

"The usual season in Washington last spring was reduced to nine days because of my long journey to Los Angeles; but during that time three public lectures and three classes were given and the days were filled with private interviews. The growth in interest surprised everyone; for the seating capacity of the hall was not only taxed to the utmost at the public meetings, but a number were content to stand throughout the lectures. Another branch of the Boston Centre, in Geneva, established by the Swami prior to the outbreak of the war, also continues its regular weekly meetings under the direction of the students.

"Existing abnormal conditions have seriously affected publishers and book-dealers everywhere, so it could not be expected that our publication department should not feel it. People are too deeply absorbed in the book of life to have much interest in the printed page. If they turn to it, it is only to find a key to the larger book. That Vedanta has offered a satisfactory commentary on it for some at least is proved by the fact that 2000 copies of our publications have gone into circulation through the year. We have likewise brought out three new booklets and two new editions of previously published books, making a total production of 4500 copies. Besides this, our monthly publication, "The Message of the East," which is now beginning its seventh volume, has carried the teaching to

many distant points in Europe and in India, as well as in this country."

After the Report, Senorita Blanchart sang with great artistic charm. Then the Swami spoke again, telling something more of his work in Europe and in the West. In conclusion he called upon all those present to join him in a prayer for the welfare, not only of the Centre, but of all mankind. A duet by Senor and Senorita Blanchart followed, after which the exercises were closed by a benediction. A new booklet containing a brief history of the work and an explanation of Vedanta was then presented to each of the guests. Refreshments were served and the rest of the evening was passed in social intercourse interspersed with music and informal speeches. Dr. Coomaraswamy, who has been appointed curator of the Indian department at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, told something of the valuable collections under his care; while Mrs. Adams paid a hearty tribute to the teaching of the Centre by telling how it had broadened and ripened her understanding in all branches of thought.

The Boston Centre has published another valuable booklet, entitled "Self-Mastery." It contains three lectures by Swami Paramananda on "Self-Conquest," "How to Conserve our Energies," and "Self-Help and Self-Surrender." This is the fourth in a series of small volumes which the Swami is bringing out to give in clear and concise form the salient points of the principles and practice of the Vedanta teaching. The previous booklets were: "Universal Ideal of Religion," "Problem of Life and Death," "Concentration and Illumination." The present one will prove of especially practical help because it deals with the problems which confront those who are thrown out into active life in the world. *(Self-Mastery. Paper, 25 cents. Post. 2cts.)*

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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MATTER AND SPIRIT

By Swami Ramakrishnananda.

The struggle of Spirit against matter is what is meant by religion. This struggle must go on until Spirit has conquered matter. Now we are like prisoners in the flesh. If a man is shut up in a prison, he may now and then get a smell of liberty when the guards fall asleep or grow unmindful; then they fall upon him again and he remembers that he is in prison. So we may now and then get a glimpse of freedom in this prison of the flesh, but again the senses fall upon us and drag us back. And to get out is altogether a different thing. Blessed indeed is the man who is able to overcome matter. This body is conceived in desire and born in desire; hence it is a creature of desire, which means that in it matter preponderates over Spirit. Therefore it is not an easy affair for us to overcome matter. But if we struggle hard enough, in course of time we can even transform this body so that in it Spirit will preponderate over matter.

This struggle against matter is not the affair of a day, however. It takes a long time to master the habit of years and even lifetimes, during which matter has overruled Spirit. But we must not be disheartened or give up, because until Spirit has gained the victory, we can never

taste lasting happiness. Nor must we ever feel secure. Happy indeed is the man who even for a moment is conscious of mastery over his flesh; but he must not stop struggling and think he has conquered, for at any time he may fall. *Maya* or this world is so irresistible. It is only when God is generous to us that we can lift the veil and get a glimpse of him.

Maya is matter, and matter is dead, inert. But everywhere there is consciousness or Spirit. Some may say that matter is the cause of motion; but every movement in the universe is full of consciousness. We know the existence of matter by darkness, ignorance, doubt, miseries, fear; while Spirit is all-perfect, all-luminous, all-blissful. It is all that matter is not. It has no doubt, no fear, no misery. Yet *Maya* has so many soft, sweet ways, only the wise can detect her. All these fleeting pleasures of the world are *Maya*; sense-desire is *Maya*. There is no other. Hence he who has conquered his senses, has conquered the universe. If we can conquer sensuality, at once we shall realize our Divinity and shall know that we are no different from God.

How can we conquer our sense nature? By will or by *Bhakti* (faith and devotion). The German philosophers call it will; we call it *Bhakti*, that is intense desire to realize God. We must say: "I will conquer these senses. If I do not, let me be wiped out of existence." Napoleon was great because he would not have the word "impossible" in his vocabulary. If we have the same determination in the battle against the senses, each of us will be as great a conquerer as he was. Then we shall attain the highest realization.

In this battle, does God take account of the intensity of the effort or only of the result of the effort? He takes account of both effort and result. He takes account of

everything, for He is in everything. It is really He who makes the effort and He who brings the result. He alone knows what the effort really is and what is the result. The whole of the past, the whole of the present, the whole of the future He knows. Who of us can take account of his own words even? And how many of us know the real value of our actions? It is He alone who is doing everything. I am but a bubble, you are but a bubble, this whole universe is only a bubble on the boundless ocean of Divinity.

Say: "I have nothing to do of myself. Let Him to whom all this belongs do what He wants. I am not the body, I am not the mind. I am eternally free, eternally pure. I am infinite, beyond all limitation." This body is only an instrument, a passive instrument; and an instrument really has no existence of its own, for it is wholly dependent on the one who uses it. Suppose a pen were conscious. It could say, "I have written hundreds of letters," but actually it has done nothing, for the one who holds it has written the letters. So because we are conscious, we think that we are doing all these things, whereas in reality we are as much instruments in the hands of Spirit or the Higher Power as the pen in our hand. We must realize that nothing depends on us. When we can really believe this, then all anxiety, all fear, all doubt will vanish and we shall be eternally calm and peaceful.

I am suddenly renewed, I am changed, I am plunged into ineffable peace. My mind is full of gladness, all my past wretchedness and pain is forgot. My soul strives in gladness that she may not be separated from That which she desires to hold fast forever, as if she had found in it the goal of all her desires. — *Hugh of St. Victor.*

WISDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

From the Wisdom of Solomon.

(Apocryphal Book of the Old Testament.)

Wisdom is radiant and fadeth not away; and easily is she beheld of them that love her.

She forestalleth them that desire to know her, making herself first known.

He that riseth up early to seek her shall have no toil, for he shall find her sitting at his gates.

For to think upon her is perfectness of understanding, and he that watcheth for her sake shall quickly be free from care.

Because she goeth about, herself seeking them that are worthy of her, and in their paths she appeareth unto them graciously, and in every purpose she meeteth them.

For her true beginning is desire of discipline; and the care for discipline is love of her;

And love of her is observance of her laws; and to give heed to her laws confirmeth incorruption; and incorruption bringeth near to God;

So then desire of wisdom promoteth to a kingdom.

If therefore ye delight in thrones and sceptres, ye princes of peoples, honour wisdom, that ye may reign forever.

For this cause I prayed, and understanding was given to me; I called upon God and there came to me a spirit of wisdom.

I preferred her before sceptres and thrones, and riches I esteemed nothing in comparison of her.

Neither did I liken to her any priceless gem, because all the gold of the earth in her presence is a little sand and silver shall be accounted as clay before her.

Above health and comeliness I loved her, and I chose

to have her rather than light, because her bright shining is never laid to sleep.

But with her there came to me all good things together, and in her hands innumerable riches:

And I rejoiced over them all because wisdom leadeth them; though I knew not that she was the mother of them.

For she is unto men a treasure that faileth not, and they that use it obtain friendship with God, commended to Him by the gifts which they through discipline present to Him.

Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth, think ye of the Lord with a good mind, and in singleness of heart seek ye Him;

Because He is found of them that tempt Him not, and is manifested to them that do not distrust Him.

For crooked thoughts separate from God; and the supreme Power, when it is brought to the proof, putteth to confusion the foolish:

Because wisdom will not enter into a soul that deviseth evil, nor dwell in a body that is held in pledge by sin.

For a holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and will start away from thoughts that are without understanding, and will be put to confusion when unrighteousness hath come in.

For wisdom is a spirit that loveth man, and she will not hold a blasphemer guiltless for his lips; because God beareth witness of his reins, and is a true overseer of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue; because the spirit of the Lord hath filled the world, and that which holdeth all things together hath knowledge of every voice.

Court not death in the error of your life; neither draw upon yourselves destruction by the works of your hands:

Because God made not death; neither delighteth He when the living perish.

For righteousness is immortal.

SPIRITUAL HEALING

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

Is cure of disease possible and practical by other than medical means? If there is a particle of Truth in mental or Spiritual healing we must not only cease to be antagonistic towards it, but must welcome it with our whole heart. This world is full of suffering and if any one can bring relief, we should not care through what channel it comes. In order to investigate these vital problems of life we must be willing to put aside our preconceived ideas and prejudices and take an attitude of openness and fairness. In all the Sacred Writings of the world accounts are given of supernatural cures. Healing of the sick, raising of the dead, drawing out of evil spirits: these are not peculiar to the life of Jesus the Christ, but are to be found in the lives of all the great Saviours, Prophets, Saints and Seers. There is one type of mind which regards all these narratives as absurd and mythical, designed to misguide the ignorant; there is another type which is over-credulous and inclined to magnify all such accounts, regarding them as special miracles possible only to certain divinely appointed ones. But intellectual scepticism cannot help us, neither can blind acceptance. Our attitude should be neither to discredit nor to support on hearsay, but to investigate and learn the truth.

In the Vedic Scriptures we are told that the Soul of man is beyond all mortal afflictions; that it "is free from sin, free from old age, free from death and grief, free from hunger

and thirst." These words open another vista. Are we then not what we believe ourselves to be? Are these bodily conditions unreal? No; our physical life is not unreal, but it does not constitute the whole of our being. In fact, it represents but a very small part of our real life. Unfortunately, to the majority of us it seems the largest part; and it is through such misconceptions that we block the steady flow of our life-force and suffer in endless ways. Disease always indicates disturbance and disorder; and disorder invariably results when our physical tendencies lead us away from the direct influence of the Soul, or when our bodily desires gain ascendency over our spiritual instincts. If it is true, however, that the vital part of our life is unchangeable, unaffected by suffering and disease, what is it we see around us? We recognize disease, we recognize suffering; for nearly all of us these pains and ailments are facts, while that unchangeable Reality seems at most a dream.

There is no doubt that physical science has done a great deal to help mankind. It has brought relief; but that relief is not permanent, because the elements with which it deals are not permanent. It does not reach the cause of the misery; nor does it apply the ultimate remedy. "Through the power of Spirit man liveth!" Such are the words of all the Bibles of the world. The real seat of disease is more often in the mind than in the body. We know how our mental attitude can have a devitalizing influence on our physical constitution and also how it can energize it. When we are not well, we often try change of climate; and the same kind of inward change is even more helpful, that is, change of thought. If we can leave behind all thought of disease, that is the best way of eliminating it. By this method we forget the body and thereby lift ourselves out

of the condition. But we cannot do this so long as we believe that our existence is dependent on this body. We must realize that we are born of God and sustained by Spirit, and therefore nothing can prevail against us. It is because we have severed our consciousness from this point of view and drifted away that we feel helpless and suffer.

The only true healing is accomplished by contact with the spiritual essence; but this cannot be done in a professional way. I believe in spiritual healing. I have seen too many instances of it to doubt it. One may not believe in prayer, but prayer heals. Faith also has great healing power, because it elevates us to a plane where we can be healed. There are many, many instances of this in India. Men who have been pronounced incurable by physicians have made a long journey to touch the feet of a holy man or bathe in a sacred river or pray at a certain shrine, believing firmly that they will thereby be cured, and they have been. Whence comes this power? All power is of the Spirit. Through our whole-hearted prayer and unwavering faith, we succeed in making ourselves receptive to this power. Unless we are open to its direct influence, it cannot penetrate our being and heal or help us. We see in Christ's life that He was not able to help all the people with whom He came in contact, but only those who had unquestioning faith. In St. Matthew we read: "And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed Him, crying and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when He was come into the house the blind men came to Him, and Jesus saith unto them: Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto Him, yea, Lord. Then touched He their eyes saying, according to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened." Again He spoke thus to the woman who had touched His garment: "Daughter, be of good com-

fort; thy faith hath made thee whole." And the woman was made whole from that hour. Also to the Centurion He said: "As thou hast believed, so be it unto thee." This absolute faith is the basis of all healing; even in medical science it is necessary; but it is not that kind of faith which is identified with indiscrimination and ignorance. We must always differentiate between faith and blind belief. Faith springs from purity of heart, from direct perception. As the Soul recognizes the power of God over all things and seeks to be restored by that power, a connection is established and healing is accomplished.

The Scriptures tell us that disease is the result of sin. Some define sin as wrong thinking, others as wrong-doing; but whatever definition we accept, it is apparent that when we go against nature, we create certain results from which we cannot escape. But why do good people and innocent children suffer? Those who ask this question do not take into account that no one's life begins here and now. What comes here may be the result of mistakes in previous lives. Also suffering should not always be regarded as a punishment. It is often a great purifying agent. Through how many hardships and painful experiences have great Souls had to pass in order to attain their greatness! Even sickness sometimes proves a blessing. It all depends on the mental attitude with which we meet it. If we allow ourselves to be dragged down and made despondent and unhappy by it, then it becomes a misfortune; otherwise it may be the means of bringing to us a new spiritual awakening.

We must analyze and find out what is our real nature. We must ask ourselves: "What part of myself is my true Self? Is it my hands or my feet? Is it my mind or my ego?" Thus we keep on lifting and lifting the thought,

until we rise to a plane where we no longer identify ourselves with the body. The highest form of healing is when we do not think of the body at all. We do not seek the Spirit for a little health or a little prosperity. We love the Spirit wholly for the sake of Spirit; yet every time we come in touch with it, we are revivefied.

Before we reach this exalted state, however, there are certain scientific systems which will aid us. In Raja-Yoga and Hatha-Yoga, where health comes first, we are told that we must have a proper physical vehicle with which to work out our perfection. One way to do this is through the control of breath. The breath is the medium of life. When a man ceases to breathe we say he is dead. By the understanding and application of the science of right breathing we can keep this body in a healthy condition; because by our breathing we control the Prana or life-force. As long as this life-force continues to circulate evenly and steadily, perfect rhythm or balance will be maintained in our system and we shall enjoy good health. We know, however, from our own experience how dependent our breath is on the mind. The slightest mental agitation will destroy the regularity of the breath and cause disturbance in the system. If we are not able to bring any counteracting influence, this disturbance may develop into definite pain or disease. If, on the contrary, we can control our breathing, we shall restore the equilibrium of our mind and thereby safeguard our health. When we acquire complete breath-control, we have such a store of Prana at our command that we can send it to any part of our organism, where there may be pain or distress, and reinvigorate it. Also we can transmit it to others. This explains the sudden cures by laying on of hands and all forms of magnetic healing. One must be very careful, however, in permitting this kind of treatment; for

unless the channel is pure, it may lead to serious consequences. A man may have a certain magnetic power and yet not be free from selfish personal motives; if we bring ourselves under the domination of such influences we shall impede our higher growth, although for the time being we may gain relief from our physical ailment.

If we do not think rightly and live rightly, we cannot have health; because we generate a poison in our system by our wrong thoughts and actions, which must culminate in disease. Even medical science has come to recognize that any strong passion, such as vehement anger or bitter hatred, may lead to serious illness. If, on the other hand, we live absolutely in accordance with spiritual laws, we need not concern ourselves about our health. We shall be filled spontaneously with life from the central storehouse; for whenever man can rise above the little self and become united with that which is universal and cosmic, there is no limit to his strength. It is because we fail to keep ourselves connected with this storehouse that our vitality is so often depleted. We forget whence comes our supply; and for this reason we must have fixed hours to remind us. The tendency of materialism is to make us forget. It holds out promises of prosperity, but it cuts the very root of the tree of life. If we care merely for one flower or fruit of a tree and water that instead of pouring the water on the root, the tree withers. In the same way, only as we water the root of the tree of life by daily conscious communion with the Spirit, does it grow and become productive. When we are suffering, we must search within ourselves and see whether we are connected with the Source or not. If the connection is broken, we may know that that is the cause of our ailments. Sometimes we are unable to establish the connection for ourselves and then we are forced to seek

help outside; but this cannot be effective until we have within us a certain amount of harmony and purity; for it is not all who can be helped, but only those who are open-hearted.

It is expected of every Spiritual Teacher that his very word or touch will be full of healing. But from where does the Teacher get it? Through Divine communion and complete surrender. He merges the little self in the Infinite Self; and when anyone can rise above all sense of bodily limitation and I-ness and trust wholly in God, when his thought is based on God and he knows nothing exists outside of God, then whatever flows through his mind must be effective. A Saint says to a man: "Be thou whole," and at once he becomes whole. Why? Because constant contemplation of Truth has made the Saint truthful; nothing false dwells in his heart; his will has become part of the Divine Will; therefore whatever he says must come true, because he has no thought apart from God. The power of God destroys all limitations in human life just as the light of the sun destroys darkness. When we come to the threshold of God, the whole being is filled with power. All the Great Ones are full of this power and they have it because they do not ask anything for themselves. They give themselves wholly to the Infinite Power, hence they have power in abundance. Whenever a manifestation of the light and love of God comes, he destroys all sorrow. He becomes a constant solace to mankind and people gather round him to be healed of the wounds of this world. A Saint or Saviour is always marked by his healing grace, but we must never forget that this power is God-given and should never be used for material ends. Whoever would exercise it must always remember that it is of God, and that he must keep himself as a pure, clear channel through which the Divine Power can flow.

Spiritual healing can never be used as a profession. So long as there is the least element of self-seeking or thought of personal gain, there will always be a danger of blocking the channel of communication with the reservoir of life. The healer must feel himself wholly an instrument of God. The gift of healing the sick and comforting the afflicted comes from a Divine Source, and can only come to one who is absolutely free from self-consciousness and calculation. It must be used silently, without any noise or thought of recognition. As soon as any ulterior personal motive enters, the power diminishes; for these things cannot go hand in hand — the power of God and the ambition of man. Whenever we try to use a lofty Ideal for an ordinary purpose like money-making or self-aggrandizement, it must become degraded. In India spiritual healing has always been known, but it has never been used as a profession or as a means of livelihood. It has been practised silently and the personal element has always been eliminated. In consequence, although there are thousands of instances of healing in the lives of India's Great Teachers, very few have been recorded. Christ, too, said more than once: "Go and tell no man." Often people quote from the Bible that the laborer is worthy of his hire; but the only true wage for spiritual service can be increased spiritual power and inward joy, not any material gain. The motive in all such work must be selfless love. If our heart burns with the desire to help humanity, we shall not think of anything else. The more we feel the presence of God and the less our thought dwells on worldly gain or loss, the more shall we be filled with the spirit of love and without love there cannot be any true healing.

At every moment we have within us the possibility of health and ill-health; and when a person rouses health in us,

he only rekindles the dormant fire of life already there. Though we may obtain help from outside, we can never be permanently helped until we gain knowledge of our own true nature. Therefore Vedanta teaches "Know Thy Self," because knowledge of the Higher Self is death to all the afflictions of the world. If we can gain conscious possession of the healing power within us, we do not need to look to others for help; we can heal ourselves. There are various methods by which we may accomplish self-healing,—rigid and continuous denial of disease, constructive affirmations, and concentration of the mind on a counteracting influence. These may be effective, but all methods of self-exertion are fraught with the subtle danger of egotism. The highest and safest form of self-healing is when we do it involuntarily through meditation; that is, we abandon all thought of sickness or health, we lift our mind beyond all mundane things and strive to enter into the Divine Presence. When we are able to do this for a moment even, we are made whole. Although we do not ask to be restored, yet health comes.

Meditation has wonderful healing power. Sleep gives a hint of it. When we fall asleep we forget all our suffering, but infinitely more true is this in meditation. In meditation we are conscious only of the Infinite One and when our thought is wrapped up in that One, our whole being is flooded with new life and strength. Only when we are primarily of God and secondarily of the world do we rise above all our miseries and are healed of all our mortal pains. As the Upanishads declare: "The unbounded Infinite is bliss, there is no bliss in the finite. The Infinite is immortal, the finite is mortal. He who has reached this, if blind, ceases to be blind; if wounded, ceases to be wounded; if afflicted, ceases to be afflicted."

BENGALEE HYMN

O, Lord! Thou hast blessed me with Thy vision and driven all my troubles away.
A charm hast Thou thrown o'er my Soul!
Beholding Thee as a Reality, all the worlds have forgotten their grief,
And none more than I, who rest wholly in Thy Mercy and Loving-kindness.

HEALING IN HISTORY

By Sister Devamata.

In the book of Malachi we are told that "the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings"; and by this sign above all others do we know Him. The life of every Saviour and Saint is indeed a continuous story of healing. Whether man is cured of blindness of the eyes or of the mind, of deformity of the body or of the heart, it is all one. To restore the withered hand of the man in the Synagogue was no more a miracle of healing than to reclaim the withered moral sense of a Mary Magdalene. Every Redeemer who comes to earth comes for one end alone,—to save men from sin; and sin, according to Plato in the *Republic*, "is disease, deformity and weakness." It is not strange, then, that the life-narratives of all the Great Ones are full of accounts of making whole the halt, the sick, the infirm and the afflicted.

In Persia, Zoroaster and Bochie were accredited with many cases of miraculous healing. In Egypt countless miraculous cures were attributed to Horus, Osiris, Isis and Serapis. Marduk, the Assyrian deity, called the Life-Giver, performed frequent cures. And so many were those wrought by the Greek Aesculapius that he was deified and

given by Homer the title of the "blameless physician." Long after his death people continued to be healed by faith in his name; and his temples were full of hands and feet, eyes, ears and other bodily members—made of wax, silver or gold — to testify to the cases of blindness, deafness, lameness or disease cured by him. Also pillars and walls were covered with tablets giving accounts of the sicknesses healed. Many of these votive tablet are still extant. In 292 B. C., when a terrible pestilence was raging in Rome, a temple to the Greek Deity was erected on an island in the Tiber and similar miracles of healing begun there. Marinus, a pupil of the philosopher Proclus, has left an account of a remarkable cure performed through his master. It runs thus: "Asclipigenia, a young maiden who had lived with her parents, was seized with a grievous distemper, incurable by the physicians. All help from the physicians failing, the father applied to the philosopher, earnestly entreating him to pray for his daughter. Proclus, full of faith, went to the temple of Aesculapius, intending to pray for the sick young woman to the god; but while he was praying, a sudden change appeared in the damsel and she immediately became convalescent."

This cure by faith, however, was not confined to the temples of Aesculapius. It was a wide-spread and accepted fact throughout Greece. Herodotus, the Greek historian, narrates the incident of a certain rich lady in Sparta who gave birth to an unsightly cripple. Seeing the grief and shame of the parents, a faithful nurse carried the baby daily to the temple of the Goddess Helen and standing before the sacred image prayed with great faith and fervor that the child might be freed from its deformity. One day as she was leaving the temple, a gentle lady asked her what she was carrying in her arms; and learning that it was an in-

fant, she asked to see it. The nurse refused, as her mistress had forbidden her to show it. The stranger, however, begged again so insistently that the nurse at last uncovered the little cripple. The lady, who was none other than the goddess, stroked the head of the afflicted child with caressing hands and said that it would outshine all the women of Sparta in loveliness. From that day the baby's appearance began to change, the crooked limbs became straight and she grew to be renowned for her beauty.

We remember how Jesus laid His hands on the woman who was bowed together and could in no way lift herself up, saying: "Woman, thou art freed from thine infirmity," and immediately she was made straight. So we are told of Sri Krishna, that while He was walking in the streets of Dwaraka as a youth of sixteen, before the trial of strength planned by His wicked uncle to destroy Him, He met an aged hunchback, who in humble devotion adorned His person with flower garlands, sandal paste and sweet scents. When asked what He could offer her in return, she begged to regain the use of her limbs. Taking her by the hand, Sri Krishna lifted her from the ground and she was not only cured of her deformities, but was also renewed in age, appearing young and beautiful.

There can be no doubt that the Essenes in Palestine were healers, for it is now believed by some scholars that their very name is a derivation of the word "*Asa*," meaning "healers"; and history tells us that they not only miraculously healed the sick, but cast out demons. The similar Order of *Therapeutae* in Egypt also owed their title to the same practice of healing. Among the Jews the casting out of devils was a frequent occurrence and went hand in hand with the practice of healing. Josephus, the Jewish historian, declared that King Solomon possessed a peculiar gift

in this direction; and he describes how he himself saw one of his follow-countrymen, Eleazar by name, drive out an evil spirit from one possessed, while a vast multitude looked on. The Greek writer Celsus also speaks of certain men in Egypt who "cast out evil spirits and cured diseases by a breath."

For all Divine Manifestations and saintly "wonder-workers" the claim is made that they not only healed the most malignant diseases, but even raised the dead to life. The Egyptian Saviour "Horus" is depicted on the ancient monuments of Egypt holding a wand with which he raises the dead. We know how Jesus stood before the tomb of Lazarus and cried with a loud voice, whereupon Lazarus came forth; and how on another occasion He went to the house of Jairus, entered the room where the ruler's young daughter lay dead, took her by the hand and the maid arose. So Apollonius of Tyana, who was born about 4 B. C., restored a Roman maiden to life. She belonged to a family of rank and had died on the eve of her wedding day. Apollonius was at the time sojourning in Rome. Meeting the funeral cortege in the street, he bade the bearers set down the bier; then bending over the young girl, he took her hand and spoke a few words in a low tone. Immediately she opened her eyes, began to speak and returned to her father's house alive and well. So great was Apollonius' power of healing that the priests of Iona gave over all the sick to his care and divine honors were conferred on him. Greater still perhaps was that cure wrought by Buddha in the mind of the young grief-stricken mother, who carried her dead son to the Lord beseeching Him to restore the child; and He sends her from house to house seeking as the only remedy a sesame seed there where death has never entered. Vainly she passes from door to door, until the

intensity of her own grief fades out in the awakening consciousness of the sorrow of the world and with patient surrender she lays her little one to rest.

It is not strange that the cure of lepers should be one of the most usual forms of healing mentioned in the lives of all Great Teachers, for throughout the Orient leprosy is a common disease. According to St. Luke, Jesus on one occasion healed an entire group of men thus afflicted. "As He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off; and they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when He saw them, He said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass that as they went, they were cleansed."

A touching cure of a similar nature is given in the life of Sri Chaitanya or Lord Gouranga, a Divine Manifestation who live in India at the time of Luther. Near the temple of Kurma there was a leper in so loathsome a condition that he was obliged to remain far from any human habitation. Hearing, however, that a Great Light, who was believed to be God Incarnate, was passing that way, he seized his staff and dragged himself to the temple, only to find that Sri Chaitanya had gone but a short time before. Overpowered with sorrow and disappointment, he fainted, crying out as he fell, "Lord, hast Thou forsaken me?" It is said that Sri Chaitanya at the time had proceeded about two miles along the road. Suddenly He stopped and listened, declaring that He heard some one call; then turning, He ran at breathless speed back to the temple. Arrived there, He lifted the fainting leper in His arms, wholly unmindful of the foul sores which covered his body and the intolerable stench which they emitted. When the leper regained consciousness, he found himself sound and well. "What hast

thou done, Lord?" he exclaimed. "I came not to be healed. I came to see Thy Lotus feet. My loathsome disease taught me humility, and I had hopes of attaining to God. But a sound body and perfect health will again generate pride and vanity in my mind."

Lord Buddha, we are told, at Gandhara came upon an old mendicant afflicted by a disease so repulsive that none of his brother monks would approach him; but the Compassionate One hastened to his side, washed his festering sores and healed him. Also a like cure was wrought by that true disciple of Christ, St. Francis of Assisi, who made it one of his chief tasks and that of his brethren to serve the lepers. There was one, however, so perverse and sick of mind as well as body that all the brothers lost heart and resolved to leave him; but not until they had obtained permission of St. Francis. When they related the matter to him, St. Francis sought out the leper and coming close to him said tenderly: "God give thee peace, my brother most dear." The leper replied: "What peace may I have of God, who hath taken from me peace and all good things and hath made me stinking and rotten altogether?" To which St. Francis gave answer: "My little son, have patience; for the infirmities of the body are given by God in this world for the salvaton of souls, seeing that they are of great merit when borne patiently." But the sick man retorted: "And how can I bear with patience the continual pain that racks me day and night? Besides, the brothers do not serve me as they ought." Then St. Francis, perceiving that the man was possessed of an evil spirit, set himself to pray and prayed fervently for him. His prayer ended, he said gently: "My son, I myself will serve thee, seeing thou art not content with others." "I am willing," replied the leper; "but what canst thou do for me more than these others?" "Whatsover thou dost

wish, that will I do." "Then I desire that thou wash me all over, for I stink so vilely that I cannot abide myself." Thereupon St. Francis bathed him in warm water with sweet smelling herbs soaked therein; and as his holy, loving hands passed over the sick man's body, the leprosy departed and his flesh was healed. With it also heart and mind were made whole, so that the man repenting of his sins began to glorify God.

For the great majority these are either myths or miracles; but Nature takes account of neither. No change occurs in her domain save by the working of definite forces according to fixed laws. Wherever there is a physiological reaction, there has been a normal action; it matters not whether it has been induced by the administering of a drug, of a mental suggestion or of a new spiritual ideal. It suffices that certain forces have been set in motion, which must stir the stagnant vital energies and cause a renewal. Also the subtler the force applied, the more rapid will be the change effected. We know how much swifter is the action of a gas than of a grosser substance. Therefore the highest healing, such as that wrought by a pure spiritual being, will appear instantaneous. An embrace or a touch suffices to wipe out the disease; just as a sudden emission of certain gases will immediately clear the air of disease germs or quench a conflagration.

The fact that the same so-called miracles have been repeated in the lives of the various Saviours and Saints is also used by the skeptical as an argument against their authenticity; and even against the actual existence of those who performed them. But if a doctor in Paris and later another in London should perform similar cures by the same means, we would not regard that as a proof that the cures were legendary and still less that the doctors were non-ex-

istent. It is wholly contrary to the true spirit of science to dismiss unexplained phenomena without seeking to acquaint ourselves with the forces which have produced them. When there is any deviation in the movements of a planet, the astronomer looks for some new force at work; and if anywhere in the scheme of things aught occurs which belies our past experience, only one sane course is open to us,—to seek out the power that has caused the deviation and make ourselves masters of it.

SUBJUGATION OF THE SENSES

From the Mahabharata.

When a person engages in the discipline of self-examination, after having subdued the senses, which have of their own proper objective play in the external conditions of sound, form, etc., then he beholds his own Spirit pervading the universe and the universe reflected in his Spirit. He who is wedded to his previous *karma*, although skilled in the highest spiritual wisdom, is cognizant only of his Soul's objective existence; but the person whose Soul is never affected by the objective conditions around, is never subject to ills, owing to the soul's union with the Spirit of God. When a person has overcome the dominion of illusion, his manly virtues, consisting of the essence of spiritual wisdom, turn to that spiritual enlightenment which illumines the intelligence of all sentient beings. Such a person is styled by the omnipotent intelligent Spirit as one who is without beginning and without end, self-existent, immutable, incorporeal and incomparable. This, O Brahmana, is wholly the result of self-discipline. And this self-discipline can only be acquired by subduing the senses. It cannot be otherwise.

Heaven and hell are both dependent on our senses.

When subdued, they lead to heaven; when indulged in, they lead to perdition. This subjugation of the senses is the highest means of attaining spiritual light. Our senses are at the root of our spiritual advancement, as also at the root of all our spiritual degradation. By indulging them a person undoubtedly contracts vices, and by subduing these he attains salvation. The self-restrained person, who acquires mastery over the six senses inherent in our nature, is never tainted with sin and consequently evil has no power over him.

Man's corporeal self has been compared to a chariot, his Soul to a charioteer and his senses to horses. A dexterous man drives about without confusion, like a quiet charioteer with well-broken horses. That man is an excellent driver who knows how to patiently wield the reins of those wild horses,—the six senses inherent in our nature. When our senses become ungovernable, like horses on the high road, we must patiently rein them in; for with patience we are sure to get the better of them. When a man's mind is overpowered by any one of these senses running wild, he loses his reason and becomes like a ship tossed upon the high ocean. Men are deceived by illusion in hoping to reap the fruit of these six senses; but the effects of these senses are carefully studied by persons of spiritual insight, who thereby reap the fruits of their clear perception.

As thieves cannot enter a house the inmates of which are wide awake, so if you are always on your guard, no evil desires will be able to enter your heart to rob it of its goodness. Do not let worldly thoughts and anxieties disturb your mind. Do everything that is necessary in its proper time and let your mind be always fixed on God.

— *Sri Ramakrishna.*

REPORTS

The course of addresses on "Emerson and the Vedanta," delivered by Swami Paramananda at the regular Sunday morning service of the Centre during February, aroused enthusiastic interest and called out a large attendance. These lectures will appear in "The Message of the East" at intervals during the current year.

On the evening of February 21st a Service was held at The Vedanta Centre of Boston to commemorate the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, the Founder of the important work in India of which the Centre in Boston forms a part. Music, meditation and an address by Swami Paramananda filled the earlier part of the evening, after which there was an informal reception. The Swami began his address by saying: "A great religious teacher in India once proclaimed that if a man thinks a noble thought, though he may think that thought shut up in a mountain cave and then die, his thought will continue to live and produce something. No truer example can be found of this than in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. A child born in a remote village, uneducated, unknown, yet something he found in his Soul which made itself felt not only in the hearts of his immediate neighbors, but in many hearts outside India in many parts of the world. This shows that the greatest thing one can give is of the Spirit, and that a spiritual gift is unbounded. But though Sri Ramakrishna's personality may be remote to many here, the note he struck was neither alien nor remote. What he brought was not peculiar to India. His message was universal. It was for all. The strength of his teaching lay not in any special doctrine, for he had none; it was not in any new revelation; it was in the fact that he lived it; and whenever a man lives his teaching truly, he starts a new current for the betterment of the whole human race."

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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EMERSON AND VEDANTA

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

"If what philosophers say of the kindred between God and man be true, what has anyone to do but, like Socrates, when he is asked what countryman he is, never to say that he is a citizen of Athens or Corinth, but of the world? . . . Why may not he who understands the administration of the world and has learned that the greatest and most principal and comprehensive of all things is this system composed of men and God; and that from Him the seeds of being are descended, not only to my father and grandfather, but to all things that are produced and born on earth, and especially to rational natures, as they alone are qualified or partake of communion with the Deity, being connected with Him by understanding: why may not such a one call himself a citizen of the world? Why not a son of God?" These words of the Roman philosopher Epictetus show how all truly great men possess a universal philosophy of life; and how natural it is for them to transcend the limitations of locality, race and creed and break down all barriers of apparent differences.

This is essentially true of Emerson. You may go to the Far East — to India, Persia or China — and you will find a volume or two of his essays there when you would least

expect to find them; and meet people who accept Emerson's ideas, not only with sympathy, but as their own. Recently I saw a learned Persian gentleman in California who spoke of this, saying that Emerson voiced the spirit of their philosophy to a remarkable degree. There can be no doubt that Emerson was deeply interested in Eastern thought. In his writings we find many direct and indirect references to Oriental teachings. He was a devout student of the Bhagavad-Gita and the Upanishads, and often quoted or used stories from them. His poem on *Brahma* is a free rendering of several verses in the Gita; the story given at the close of his essay on *Immortality* is taken from the Katha-Upanishad or "The Secret of Death," as Sir Edwin Arnold calls it in his translation; and there are various other passages which recall the Sacred Writings of India.

Yet this does not mean that Emerson borrowed. I believe that there cannot be any borrowing in the higher realms of knowledge. There we cannot take what does not belong to us. We can borrow relative knowledge, but true knowledge can never be borrowed. It must rise up from the innermost recesses of our being. We must possess the power to recognize and assimilate it. Emerson was by no means the only one of his generation to study Oriental literature. Others read it; but they were unable to find in it what he did, because their prejudices and lack of understanding made it impossible for them to grasp its true import. A gentleman once said to Emerson that he had studied all the different philosophies and religions of the world and he was now convinced that Christianity was the only one; to which Emerson replied: "That only shows, my friend, how narrowly you have read them." Unless we have openness of mind and a certain depth of

spiritual consciousness, we may come in contact with many lofty ideals, but they will make no definite impression on us. We may try to borrow them, but we cannot retain them or use them intelligently until we have made them our own. And when the higher light of understanding comes, we find that there is no need to borrow, because all men have equal access to what is cosmic. As Emerson has said:

"There is one mind common to all individual men. Every man is an inlet to the same and to all the same. He that is once admitted to the right of reason is made a freeman of the whole estate. What Plato has thought, he may think; what a saint has felt, he may feel; what at any time has befallen any man, he can understand. Who hath access to this universal mind is a party to all that is or can be done, for this is the only and sovereign agent." "Of the universal mind each individual is one more incarnation. All its properties consist in him." "So all that is said of the wise man by Stoic or Oriental or modern essayist, describes to each reader his own idea, describes his unattained but attainable self." "How easily these old worships of Moses, of Zoroaster, of Manu, of Socrates, domesticate themselves in the mind. I cannot find any antiquity in them: they are mine as much as theirs." This idea of the universal mind brings before us forcibly the great fundamental truth of the Vedas,— *Ekam-eva-dvityam*, "Spirit is one without a second." Out of that one essence the whole universe has evolved and in that one it rests. As it is said in the Yajur-Veda: "The Absolute, though one, is conceived as many; countless luminaries become one in Him; all the Vedas (Scriptures) become one in Him; all sacred rites become one in Him. He abides equally in the Soul of all existing things; He is the Inner

Self of all beings, seated in the heart of every living creature; He is the Ruler of all creatures and all beings become one in Him."

When Emerson gave expression to these ideas which were not strictly orthodox from the Christian point of view, he did not meet with a sympathetic welcome. He even had to resign his pulpit, as we know; but this did not make him give up his convictions, which proves his true greatness. Whenever a man is willing to make compromises and limit his beliefs through fear of public opinion, we may know that he lacks true spirituality. But Emerson was not merely a popular preacher or a scholar, he was a spiritual genius. He had a wider vision. He struck a note that was both spiritual and universal. He writes in his essay on *Circles*: "I thought as I walked in the woods and mused on my friends, why should I play with them this game of idolatry? I know and see too well, when not voluntarily blind, the speedy limits of persons called high and worthy. O blessed Spirit, whom I forsake for these, they are not thou. Every personal consideration that we allow costs us heavenly state. We sell the thrones of angels for a short and turbulent pleasure."

This passage shows clearly his attitude of mind, how unwilling he was to give up what he believed to be true and what was the result of his long and deep reflection. "What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think," he exclaims. "This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the

midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude." Great Souls sometimes seem very uncompromising because they are unwilling to sacrifice that which they believe to be vital. They necessarily have a different standard, and they cannot be untrue to that standard even though the whole world turn against them. As Emerson says: "The angels are so enamored of the language that is spoken in heaven that they will not distort their lips with the hissing and unmusical dialects of men, but speak their own, whether there be any who understand it or not." Those who possess such courage of conviction are the only ones who really contribute towards the well-being of mankind.

Emerson more than once speaks of his debt to the Hindu Scriptures, and there can be no doubt that in his long study of them he found much to inspire him. In his essay on *Quotations and Originality* he says: "What divines had assumed as the distinctive revelations of Christianity, theologic criticism has matched by exact parallelisms from the Stoics and poets of Greece and Rome. Later when Confucius and the Indian Scriptures were made known, no claim to monopoly of ethical wisdom could be thought of." "It is only within this century that England and America discovered that their nursery-tales were old German and Scandinavian stories; and now it appears that they came from India, and are the property of all the nations descended from the Aryan race, and have been warbled and babbled between nurses and children for unknown thousands of years." Once more in *Persian Poetry* he writes: "The favor of the climate, making subsistence easy and encouraging an outdoor life, allows to the Eastern nations a highly intellectual organization,— leaving out of view at present the genius of the Hindoos

(more Oriental in every sense), whom no people have surpassed in the grandeur of their ethical statement."

After reading these passages we cannot doubt that Emerson fully recognized the loftiness and beauty of Eastern teaching. He also possessed an unusual grasp of Indian Philosophy and picked out here and there its fairest thoughts to mingle with his own. Today it is easy to find many translations of Oriental writings; but in his time the translations were few and imperfect; yet because he possessed the same quality of mind, he was able to draw out from them the essence. He was like the mythical Indian Swan, who when it is given milk mixed with water, is able to separate the milk from the water and take only the milk. Whenever we study in a superficial way, we do not touch the essence and the essence does not touch us. We all have the opportunity of coming in contact with great writings or great men, but they do not reach us. Sri Ramakrishna to illustrate this gives a parable of three dolls, one of salt, one of cloth and one of stone. When the salt doll went into the ocean, it at once became one with it; the cloth doll was wet through, but retained its own form; while the stone doll remained unchanged. It could not absorb the spirit of the ocean. So some people have such a stony nature, nothing seems to make an impression on them. But we can all overcome this and make ourselves susceptible to higher ideals if we wish.

Vedanta insistently proclaims that there can be no boundary lines in the realm of thought; and above all it teaches that unless we can put aside our narrow prejudices and superstitions, we can never hope to attain the highest Truth. I use the word "superstition" because whenever we cling to a fixed idea or to certain forms and rituals merely because our forefathers believed in them

or because they have become a habit with us, that is superstition. The central aim of Vedanta is to bring all into one universal fold, yet to let each one follow his own particular form of faith. When we try to force sameness of thought, it bars spiritual progress; but when we admit the possibility of perfect unity in variety, then each one is able to advance in his own way. Vedanta realizes that as long as there are such differences in human temperament and mind, we cannot expect all to worship in the same manner. To destroy diversity in life would be to destroy much of its beauty and sublimity. Therefore Vedanta includes in its scope all forms of thought. It sees that even the crudest aspect of religious faith has its value, since it would not be possible for the ignorant man and the philosopher to have the same conception of Truth. Their aspiration may be equal, but their methods of expression must inevitably differ.

"Truth is one, men call it by various names and comprehend it in different ways!" Such was the profound discovery of Indo-Aryan Sages as far back as in the Rig-Veda, several thousand years before the Christian era; and it has been the basis ever since for all the ethical and spiritual ideals of India. These Seers realized that dualism, qualified non-dualism and monism did not represent rival phases of belief, but different degrees of spiritual development, each having special appeal for certain types of mind. It would be just as absurd to expect a person of rudimentary understanding to grasp the loftiest ideals of monism,—that there is but one Life, one Cosmic Principle, one Consciousness permeating the whole universe, as it would be to expect a child in the grammar school to grasp the highest problems of astronomy. Yet in time we know that the child will grow to comprehend them if he perseveres.

Emerson makes this plain in his essay on *Immortality* when he writes: "Will you offer empires to such as cannot set a house or private affairs in order? Here are people who cannot dispose of a day; an hour hangs heavy on their hands; and will you offer them rolling ages without end? But this is the way to rise. Within every man's thought is a higher thought,— within the character he exhibits today, a higher character. The youth puts off the illusions of the child, the man puts off the ignorance and tumultuous passions of youth; proceeding thence puts off the egotism of manhood, and becomes at last a public and universal soul. He is rising to greater heights, but also rising to realities; the outer relations and circumstances dying out, he entering deeper into God, God into him, until the last garment of egotism falls, and he is with God and shares the will and immensity of the First Cause.

"It is curious to find the selfsame feeling, that it is not immortality, but eternity,—not duration, but abandonment to the Highest, and so the sharing of His perfection,— appearing in the farthest East and West. The human mind takes no account of geography, language, or legends, but in all utters the same instinct."

Emerson's great openness, fairness and love of Truth enabled him to understand the teaching of all nations; and whenever he came across great truths, he recognized and absorbed them. When a man can thus perceive the highest in other men, it deals a death-blow to all littleness. In comparing Emerson's philosophy with the Vedic teaching there is no intention to belittle the genius of Emerson. The universal facts of life are the same in East and West, in the remotest past and the present. It was because Emerson had discovered certain profound truths in his own Soul that he was able to accept with delight the

same truths when he discovered them elsewhere. Only a man who is an expert in the higher realms of knowledge can analyze and appreciate the value of ideas of rare quality when he finds them; and Emerson was able to do this. We are destined more and more to be thrown together, and I hope and pray that it may be the will of the Cosmic Being to destroy the fictitious barriers which exist between East and West, North and South; and enable us to meet in the one Universal Truth. All great minds do this. They cannot be satisfied to live in little narrow holes of their own. They must expand; and as they expand, they leave behind them all sense of difference. Those who are able to abide in this unbroken Unity become free Souls and enjoy the supreme Cosmic Bliss and Infinitude.

THE UNIVERSAL GOD

By Vemana

(An Early Telugu Sage of South India)

He whose form is universal; who is eternal; who Himself witnesses all that passes in every heart, who exists immutably throughout the universe, and is free from all shadow, is called God.

Neither in earth nor metal, wood or stone, painted walls or images, does that Great Spirit dwell so as to be perceived.

We take a skin and form it into a pretty puppet; we make it play and then throw it away. But who can see Him who plays with us?

Those who roam to other lands in pilgrimage to find the God that dwells within them are like a shepherd who searches in his flock for the sheep that he holds within his arms.

"Benares! Benares!" they cry, and delight to travel thither. Yet is not the same God here as there? If thy heart be aright, He is there and here also.

Kine are of divers colors, but all milk is alike; flowers vary, yet all worship is one; systems of faith are different, but the Deity is one.

If thy heart become calm as the breezeless firmament and the unruffled waveless deep, changeless and unmoving — this is called Salvation.

THE DUTIES OF THE HEART

By Rabbi Bachye.

(A Jewish Teacher of Spain, 11th Century)

It is the bounden duty of all who are not intellectually incapable of independent thought, to search out the true meaning of the doctrines they accept and the foundations of these doctrines in Reason. The faith of the believer is not complete unless he knows the meaning and the reasons of his belief. And this knowledge, which enables one to fulfill the duties of the heart, is the hidden wisdom that is the light of hearts and the bright effulgence of Souls. Concerning it Scripture says: "Behold Thou desirest Truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden Thou wilt make me to know wisdom." It is only those of weak intellect who are not culpable if they take on trust what it is man's duty to search out. But whoever has the strength of intellect and the power to sift and prove, is sinful if he neglects to do so; also even his lack of knowledge is a sin.

Perfect recognition of the existence and unity of God forms the only sure basis for right thought and conduct. For gratitude to the beneficent Creator of the universe and admiration of His creation involve the reasoned

resolve to benefit all His creatures, study His works and raise our Souls, perfecting them; they also tend to love of Him, resulting in obedience to His will, whether revealed through Nature or through human agency or in our innate faculties for recognizing justice and the good. The love of God and the consequent acceptance of the yoke of duty in obedience to His will is, in the Scripture passage that strikes the key-note of the faith of Israel, placed after the injunction to understand that the Creator exists, that the Eternal is God, and that He is One. ("Hear and understand, O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One.") The unity of conduct and the concentration of our love and striving after good require belief in one and only one Creator, the source of good.

Among commands relating to duties of the heart and mind are the following:—To believe that the world has a Creator, and that there is none other like Him. To accept His Unity and worship Him in our hearts. To devote intelligent thought to the wonders of His creation, so that they may be to us a sign concerning Him. To trust in Him and humble ourselves before Him; to fear Him, to tremble at the thought that He looks at us — at all that is revealed and all that is hidden about us; to desire to do His will; and to concentrate all our efforts upon good deeds that are absolutely disinterested and only motived by love of God. Also that we should not covet, and not avenge or bear a grudge. They also forbid us to think sinful thoughts or to have sinful desires, or even to contemplate the commission of any transgression, and other similar things which are hidden from man and none but God alone can see.

Thus the duties of the heart involve the formation of ideals of conduct,—love of man, faith, etc.; the cultivation

of right beliefs based on Reason; the conscious effort of the mind to realize the wonders of creation, so that we may come to know from God truths that human language, which can accurately tell only of things material, can never adequately express. That trust in God which makes right conduct possible, even at the cost of personal risk and loss; the banishing of hatred, envy, scorn, all longing for revenge and all desire for sin, are also obligations of the heart. And they include all degrees of virtue, such as those that have their being in the heart alone and are not manifested in material life, save only by their influence; and yearning, till the yearning-one turns pale with longing, to realize in thought and mind and deed the will of God. And chief among them is the attuning of the Soul into such perfect harmony with God, that all right conduct and right thought must follow without effort on our part, because our will is one with His through love.

Man is made up of body and Soul; and both alike are given us by the beneficence of the Creator. The one is visible and the other invisible. We are therefore bound to serve Him with a twofold service. That of the body and its members can be fulfilled by the visible activities of man; but the second is a hidden service, which is the fulfillment of the duties of the heart — to acknowledge the Unity of God in our hearts, to believe in Him, to love Him, to resign our Souls to Him, and to make His name the unifying central thought of all our conduct.

Without Truth I know not how man can live. A cart without a crosspole, a carriage without harness, how could they be moved?

To know what we know and to know what we do not know, that is understanding. —*Sayings of Confucius*

PRAYER

O thou Infinite Spirit, Source of all life and Giver of all strength and illumination,

Quicken within us the desire to know Thee.

Kindle in our hearts an earnest longing to dedicate ourselves to the Highest.

Give us such strength of understanding that we may not be deceived by the turbulent and fleeting glamors of material life;

But that we may walk steadfastly in the path of Truth;

And continue with unwavering devotion to do that which is true and spiritual, forsaking that which is base and selfish.

O Thou All-loving One, lead us by Thy compassionate hand that we may never go astray.

Save us from delusion and ignorance.

Fill our whole being with Thy Divine Radiance.

Bestow on us spiritual sight that we may perceive oneness everywhere.

Thou abidest within us in the form of consciousness,

Give unto us true consciousness that we may feel Thy Presence.

Awaken in our hearts perfect trust in Thine Infinite Self.

Grant that at all times and under all circumstances we may surrender wholly to Thee and be led by Thy will alone.

May all our devotion be offered unto Thee.

May all our thoughts and actions be sanctified and consecrated unto Thee.

O Thou Boundless One! Thou art our loving Mother and Protecting Father;

Grant unto us Thy loving protection and keep us ever in peace.

—*Swami Paramananda.*

THE TRUE NATURE OF RELIGION

By S. E. Waldo.

If Vedanta were only a religion for such as could give up the world and retire to a cave or a forest, it would not at all deserve the title of universal. So very few even wish to do such a thing, that it would really be unnecessary to work out an elaborate system of procedure for them. But Vedanta earns its right to be considered universal because it provides a way for every grade of humanity. We ourselves have laid upon ourselves certain duties and will have to fulfill them before we can throw them aside in order to follow what we imagine to be an easier path. Neither have we got to change our religion, if we have one that is more than a name to us. What Vedanta would say to us is to put life into *that* religion; to look to the highest ideal it holds up and be satisfied with nothing lower; faithfully, earnestly to follow this ideal; and it will in the end lead us to the same goal of realization of the true Self. What Vedanta insists upon is not form or ceremony or rite of any special kind, but it lays all the emphasis on the underlying motive prompting to these observances. In and of themselves they are useless. Form for form's sake will never be anything but an empty shell, a mere lifeless imitation of real religious effort. The one thing that must be present is faith.

This faith is not blind belief by any means; it is rather what St. Paul describes as "the substance of things hoped for." Such faith is a real religious conviction, and is what is awakened in the human heart by one fleeting glimpse of a world beyond the horizon of the senses or even the mind; it is an impression of the Infinite. After this has come to a man and become a genuine force in his life, he will become religious, even if he refuses to accept any existing form of

religion. This spirit of true religion often breathes in the writings of great scientific men, to whom an intimate acquaintance with the wonders of Nature brings a revelation of the Infinite. Followers of orthodox religions would no doubt often call these men atheists, because of their inability to accept a traditional view of God; but Vedanta recognizes in such men the true spirit of religion, and would encourage them to develop their spiritual nature through the methods best adapted for them. Hindu literature teems with examples of men and women who reached the fullest spiritual illumination through the humblest paths. A faithful performance of even arduous and disagreeable daily tasks is in no way incompatible with great religious development. And this has been proved in every form of religion—Christian, Buddhist, Moslem or Brahminical. The lives of great saints in all lands and in all ages show that they belonged to every class of life, from beggars to emperors. In every human Soul is a spark of the Freedom Absolute, which gives it power to rise above any environment and reach its source in the realization of its oneness with the Divine.

If man were entirely at the mercy of his environment, what would he be but a mere machine? What chance for improvement could ever come to him? The whole history of the human race is the history of man's use of his environment to enable him to rise above it and produce a new environment. In other words, he works in and through law finally to transcend law. Therefore, be man's conditions what they may, they cannot prevent his effort to be religious if he has the sincere desire to be so. Let man have to labor hard as he will, there will always be moments when he can lift his thoughts to the great unknown Beyond. Those who have not evolved to the place where

they are ready to do this consciously, will be pushed along unconsciously by the great law of development until they are prepared to coöperate consciously with this law. It is better and easier to go forward consciously and therefore willingly, but progress is inevitable. When man has reached that stage in the great march of evolution where he can see the purpose of it all, he is ready to make much more rapid growth. It is not necessary for him to be able to demonstrate to everybody what that purpose is. It is enough if he himself perceives it, for then he will shape his life in harmony with it.

The vast majority of mankind today regard pleasure as the purpose of life, but even that concept has greatly widened out since its first promulgation. The early Hedonists sought individual pleasure; but the more advanced of their modern successors, while still seeking pleasure, have come to comprehend that it cannot be solely of the individual; that it must be universal pleasure. Altruism recognizes the solidarity of the human race and the impossibility of complete satisfaction for one member of it at the expense of any of the rest. And the most advanced school of utilitarian ethics makes perfect unselfishness its highest ideal. Vedanta philosophy teaches a higher purpose than pleasure. It proclaims that the end and aim of all this long and often painful process of development is perfection, and that perfection can only consist in the realization of our own true Self and God.

If a man has discerned Him, who being One rules over every germ, in whom this comes together and comes asunder again, who is the Lord, the Bestower of blessing, the Adorable God, then he passes forever into bliss.

—*Svetasvàtara-Upanishad.*

THOU ART HIDDEN FROM US

By the Sufi Poet Jalalu'd-Din Rumi.

Thou art hidden from us though the heavens are filled
With Thy Light, which is brighter than sun and moon!
Thou art hidden, yet revealest our hidden secrets!
Thou art the Source that causes our rivers to flow.
Thou art hidden in Thine essence, but seen by Thy bounties.
Thou art like the water, and we like the mill-stone.
Thou art like the wind and we like the dust.
The wind is unseen, but the dust is seen by all.
Thou art the Spring, and we the sweet green garden:
Spring is not seen, though its gifts are seen.
Thou art the Soul, we as hand and foot:
Soul instructs hand and foot to hold and take.
Thou art as Reason, we like the tongue:
'Tis reason that teaches the tongue to speak.
Thou art as Joy, and we are laughter:
The laughter is the consequence of the joy.
Our every motion every moment testifies,
For it proves the presence of the Everlasting God.

I have ascended higher than myself, and lo! I have found the Word above me still. My curiosity has led me also to descend below myself, and yet I have found Him still at a lower depth. If I have looked without myself, I have found that He is beyond that which is outside of me; and if within, He was at an inner depth still. And thus have I learned the truth of the words I have read, "In Him we live and move and have our being." —*St. Bernard.*

The finest achievement for a man of thought is to have fathomed what may be fathomed, and quietly to revere the unfathomable. —*Goethe.*

RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA

Adapted from the Brahmavadin.

All early religions are ethnic, that is, confined to particular peoples and races; and they are also given to the worship of the powers of Nature. It was so among Greeks, Romans, Babylonians, Phoenicians and others. Says Menzies in his History of Religion:—"In this minor Nature-worship, which spreads its network over all the early world, the character of primitive society is clearly represented; the small communities have their local worships—each clan, almost each kraal, has its shrine, its God, and limits itself to its own sacred things. Religion is a bond connecting together the members of small groups of men, but separating them from the members of other groups." When David says in the Bible that by going out of the land of the Israelites he would have to worship other gods, it is implied thereby that there was even a territorial limitation to the worship of Jehovah. It is only in comparatively later stages that religion ceases to be either ethnically or territorially limited, and with the cessation of this kind of limitation it naturally becomes propagandistic.

It is not meant by this that before these limitations altogether cease, there is no attempt at all at propagandism. Judaism, even in its exclusive condition, knew of the "proselytes of the gate." The occasional adoption of outsiders into the Grecian and Roman families is also an indication of the possibility of ethnic religions taking outsiders into their pale. In the post-Vedic period of the religion of the Indian Aryas there is enough of evidence to show that the sacrificial worship of the gods through fire was adopted by certain non-Aryan families and communities. "The worship of which the blood is the tie is not to the Aryan as to the Semite the whole of religion. . . . The

family may address Heaven by a special private name, or at a particular spot; but Heaven itself is above all these titles and places. The spirits of the household made, as all the Semitic gods do, for separation; but the gods above made for union; and as any community grew, the upper gods, which were worshipped by all its members alike, became more lofty and more important." Menzies, the author of these remarks, again says also that in regard to the "emancipation of the Aryans from the principle of local worship," he agrees with another noted writer on Comparative Religion in holding that "the rise of the conception of gods who could and did accompany the tribes wheresoever they travelled was the greatest triumph of the Aryan race." Nevertheless, in all earlier stages of religious development propagandism is more or less of an accidental nature. When, however, religions become highly ethical, and the moral barrier between different human communities becomes completely undermined through the influence of growing mutual intercourse and human sympathy, then it is that what may be called the universal spirit of religions really comes into existence. It is then that the religious man feels the duty of preaching the truth, of which he is in possession, to all those who are ignorant of it.

Of such propagandistic religions, Jainism and Buddhism in all probability are chronologically the two first known to the history of man. Jainism is considered to have been anterior to Buddhism; and it was a recognized function of the monks of both these religions to work to increase the number of the followers of their respective faiths. It is often said that religions depending upon the teachings of single founders are always propagandistic. Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity and Mahomedanism are given as

illustrations of this position. The fact seems to be, however, that national religions too, although not altogether dependent upon the teachings of any particular founder, are sometimes seen to be intended for the whole of mankind, particularly when those religions have advanced sufficiently far towards the recognition of what is commonly known as the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Students of Comparative Religion hold that in the development of religions the movement is from the tribal to the national, and from the national to the individual and universal religion. The individualist stage of religious thought is really the same as the universal stage. The religion which deals with man as an individual, apart from all considerations of the community to which he belongs, cannot make distinctions between man and man and so has to become universal.

The period immediately preceding the rise of Jainism and Buddhism in India seems to have been one of great religious ferment throughout the land. Dr. Herman Oldenberg seems clearly to refer to this religious unrest of the time when he says in his admirable Life of Buddha: "Voices are raised full of bitter lamentations over the degeneracy of the age, the insatiable greed of men, which knows no limit, until death comes and takes the rich and poor alike. . . . The rich and the noble still more than the poor and humble; the young wearied of life before life had well begun, rather than the old; women and maidens fly to seek peace for the soul in a renunciation of the world, abandon their homes and don the garb of monks and nuns." Both Jaina and Buddhistic literatures bear witness to the fact that there were then in the different parts of Northern India bodies of ascetics leading the prescribed life of poverty, celibacy,

homelessness and mendicancy, and proclaiming to householders of all ranks, with whom they came in contact, the several systems of religious thought and life by which it was believed possible to make man's life purposeful here and happy hereafter. The Aranyaka portion of Vedic literature, of which nearly all our Upanishads form a part, is known to have been produced out of the meditations of such bodies of ascetics, living in the forest their life of self-denial and divine meditation. The solutions which they obtained of the problems of life and death they naturally sought to teach to others. The philosophy and the discipline of both Jainism and Buddhism are now admitted on all hands to be largely, if not wholly, derived from the ancient Vedic teaching; and their spirit of propaganda also appears equally certain to have come from the same source.

When the Indian forests became filled with schools of philosophers and pious religious men discussing the purpose of life and the nature of the ultimate principle of all things, then for the first time in history we notice what may be termed the radiation of religious warmth and light from particular centres to regions more and more distant from such centres of spiritual thought and activity. No truth, when discovered, can be concealed under a bushel. The spirit of universality soon must burst out of the "busy bustle of these ascetic and philosophizing circles." Says Samuel Johnson very appropriately in his Oriental Religions: "To some vigorous spirit the abstract truths of contemplation will become forces of his own active realism; they will become hands and feet, and demand to be used. Organized into his moral being, these meditations, these divine dreams, carry him straightway out of his spiritual cell to say to the whole world: 'What is mine is yours also; the great all-reconciling light that shone down to me on

the mountaintop, in the desert stillness, in the night of self-abandonment to the best, this was not for me, it was for all mankind.'" In this sense the spirit of propagandism, or the attempt to carry new religious life and new religious light to all regions of comparative darkness, is undoubtedly the offspring of remote Indian Wisdom.

But the Indo-Aryan idea had no element of conversion in it. There was no thought of substituting one form of belief or worship for another. The whole desire was to lead men, not into some special form of faith, but into Truth, by what religious path it mattered not. It is interesting to see the same broad spirit of catholicity stirring in the Western consciousness of today, and to find a recent president of the Anthropological Section of the British Association venturing such words as these: "I know that the toleration of anything outside of their own shibboleths is hateful to some people, but I make bold to agree with Paul of Tarsus that in every nation there are men who seek after righteousness, that elements of good exist in all races, and that our duty is to select and encourage desirable elements, but never to impose any ideals which are peculiar to our own race, age, or civilization. I know that it is often said that only by clearing away all that is associated with error can we begin to lay out a plan according to our notions. In this again, I prefer to differ, along with that gentleman of Tarsus who preached the non-interference with any customs — even with idol offerings, provided they did not belie the real belief of the man in the sight of those around him. That same eminently practical authority did not see it needful — any more than that prince of common sense, Epictetus — to prohibit slavery, polygamy, or even gladiatorial shows. An appeal to the existing conscience of mankind, a clear statement of practical moral principles,

is thus laid down for us as a precedent in the greatest readjustment of the moral sense that the world has ever seen. Such a precedent is good because it has proved successful, and such may well be our guide in dealing with native customs, with rules of conduct, and with the details of dress and of habits. But changes flow from reflection and conviction, and then you have reformed a man and not manufactured an automaton."

Strange religions rarely grow well in strange lands. The different peoples of the world have to assimilate the same truths of religion in different ways, each according to its own culture and capabilities; and the policy of religious propaganda among the Hindus has all along been in keeping with this scientifically accurate conviction which Europe has taken such a long time to voice forth. The history of Hinduism is full of highly interesting psychological stepping-stones, by which innumerable men and women in India have risen without haste and without rest to the sublimest heights of religious realization. That no one religion can be fit for all and that all religions are not fit for the same man, are truths which Hinduism has fully embodied within itself; and to the beautiful spirit of toleration and universality breathing through almost every line of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita is due the silent, non-aggressive, heart-reforming growth of the power of religion in this ancient and famously religious land. As Swami Vivekananda declared at the Congress of Religions in Chicago: "Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture on my own theory. But if any one here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of these religions and the destruction of all others, to him I say: 'Brother, yours is an impossible hope.' Do I wish that the

Christian should become a Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or the Buddhist should become a Christian? God forbid. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor the Hindu or the Buddhist to become a Christian. But each religion must assimilate the others and yet preserve its own individuality and grow according to its own law of growth."

REPORT

Swami Paramananda left for the West on March 20th and reached Seattle on the 24th. He began his work at once, delivering three public lectures during the first week after his arrival. For the past two years he has received frequent urgent invitations to visit Seattle and it is probable that he will be persuaded to remain there for a month at least, after which he will continue his journey to Los Angeles and resume work at the Centre there. On the evening before his departure from Boston he gave an informal reception at the Centre, and although it was arranged at the last moment only, a large number of friends was present. During the evening a delightful musical programme was rendered by Senor and Senorita Blanchart and Miss Florence Colby, a violincellist of unusual ability. The Swami also spoke a few parting words.

No change will be made in the Services and Classes at the Boston Centre. During the Swami's absence Sister Devamata will conduct them, as she has done in previous seasons. On Good Friday a special Vesper Service was held at 5 P. M. Senor Blanchart sang one of the "Last Words on the Cross" and there was other appropriate music with intervals of meditation preceded by short instructions.

Swami Paramananda's lecture on "Spiritual Healing" will soon appear in pamphlet form. (Price 15 cents. Postage 1 cent.)

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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KARMA AND COMPENSATION

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

(Series on Emerson and Vedanta.)

"Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow; as thou dost plant the tree, so will it grow . . . Whatever the act a man commits, whate'er his state of mind, of that the recompense must he receive in corresponding body." These words were spoken to the world by Manu, the ancient Law-giver of India; and they express the basic principle of the Vedic idea of Karma. This idea is not regarded in India as a theological doctrine or as an intellectual speculation; it is considered to offer the only rational, logical and satisfactory explanation of all the perplexities and problems of human life. The word *Karma*, from the Sanskrit, literally means "work," that is, all that we think, all that we do, and whatever is produced as the result of our thought and actions. It is not limited, however, to what we think and do in this life only; its scope extends to all the past and all the future. The law must operate in both directions; because if what we are doing now is to determine our future condition, then there must have been some cause in the past for our present condition. There are many who believe in a future life, but who are unwilling to accept the idea of pre-existence; yet it requires

little logic to see that if we exist in the future, then our present life must become a pre-existence to that future life.

In India the idea of Karma is not a mere dogmatic belief; it is a fundamental law and corresponds to what modern science calls the law of cause and effect. It shows that there is no such thing as chance or injustice in human affairs; that all these inequalities that we see in the world are not ordained by an arbitrary Ruler, but are the inevitable results of our own mode of life and thought. This life, in Indian Scriptures, is called *Karma-bhumi*, the harvest field of action; and according to the seeds we sow in it, do we reap. It is evident that we cannot reap what we do not sow; hence what comes to us must be of our own planting. For the same reason people have no cause to be frightened by circumstances; for however overpowering and unalterable our present condition may seem, it can always be undone by the thoughts and actions which we sow today. Emerson gives a clear expression of this in his essay on *Compensation*.

"Ever since I was a boy," he says, "I have wished to write a discourse on Compensation; for it seemed to me when very young that on this subject life was ahead of theology and the people knew more than the preachers taught. . . . It seemed to me also that in it might be shown men a ray of divinity, the present action of the soul of this world, clean from all vestige of tradition; and so the heart of man might be bathed by an inundation of eternal love, conversing with that which he knows was always and always must be, because it really is now. It appeared, moreover, that if this doctrine could be stated in terms with any resemblance to those bright instructions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us, it would be a star in many dark hours and crooked passages in our journey

that would not suffer us to lose our way.

"I was lately confirmed in these desires by hearing a sermon at church. The preacher, a man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the Last Judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world; that the wicked are successful; that the good are miserable; and then urged from reason and from Scripture a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. . . . What did the preacher mean by saying that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that house and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them like gratifications another day—bank stock and doubloons, venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended; for what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and praise? to love and serve men? Why, that they can do now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw was: 'We are to have *such* a good time as the sinners have now,' or to put it to its extreme import, 'You sin now, we shall sin by and by; we would sin now, if we could; not being successful, we expect our revenge tomorrow.'

"The fallacy lay in the immense concession that the bad are successful; that justice is not done now. The blindness of the preacher consisted in deferring to the base estimate of the market of what constitutes a manly success, instead of confronting and convicting the world from the truth; announcing the presence of the soul; the omnipotence of the will; and so establishing the standard of good and ill, of success and falsehood."

This is what we see in the world of ordinary consciousness, the world where everything is looked at and judged

from the surface. When we analyze properly, however, we find that the whole standard here rests on a physical basis; but a complete explanation of life can never be found if we limit our vision to the surface only. So long as we merely perceive the effect and judge from that, we shall always see injustice and feel resentful. Emerson writes: "Every act rewards itself, or in other words, integrates itself, in a two-fold manner; first, in the thing, or in real nature, and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance the retribution. The causal retribution is in the thing and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific stripes may follow late after the offense, but they follow because they accompany it. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means, the fruit in the seed."

This is absolutely in accordance with the Indian conception of Karma. The effect we see is nothing but the fruition of a seed of action. Whether or not anyone keeps record of what we think or do, even in the dark, the seed we sow must bear fruit; just as a seed grows even when the gardener drops it unconsciously on the soil. It is not that an arbitrary will decrees that we be happy or unhappy. The world is governed by law and man cannot escape from that law. As soon as he understands this, he tries to put himself in harmony with it. "All things are double, one against another," Emerson writes. "Tit for tat; an eye

for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure; love for love. Give and it shall be given you. He that watereth shall be watered himself. Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less. Who doth not work shall not eat. Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them. If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own. . . . You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong." "Always pay; for first or last you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt."

This is the law, but we often forget it in the turmoil of this world, as we live on the surface and see wrong and injustice apparently triumphant. If, however, we cling to this standard of life, we lose our moral stamina and make no headway. We should not do right because it will bring us a little satisfaction, but because it is the only way to live. When understanding becomes the guiding factor in our life, then we do our duty without thought of reward. Until we reach this attitude of mind, however, all our actions will create new bondage for us. The only way we can be freed from the chain of action and reaction is by not caring for the result. But how can we work without thought of some result? What impetus shall we have? Actually if we put a price on our action, we limit the result by our own limitation and we deprive ourselves. If on the contrary we put no price whatever, but are willing to work for the sake of the work, the One who knows all things will bestow on us the greatest result. When a person gives to another or does for another with the lingering thought of gratitude or applause, this thought destroys the merit of the action. But when we can free our mind

from the desire for personal gratification, we gain everything, yet we avoid the reaction.

The compensation must come. We do not have to ask for it. If our labor is worthy of any recompense, the law will bring it to us. We cannot lose it. We are bound to get it. As Emerson puts it: "Human labor, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that everything has its price, and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get anything without its price, is not less sublime in the columns of a ledger than in the budgets of States, in the laws of light and darkness, in all the action and reaction of nature."

Sometimes this does not seem to be true, because we see people who reap results without apparent labor. Take, for example, a genius. He has not worked for his gift, he is born with it, he has it. But when we extend our vision back into the past, we find that his genius is not an accident. He has earned it, he has paid the price. He has worked for it at some time, and as the result of that labor the flower of genius has blossomed in this life. So with the child who is born miserable or unfortunate. That child has a Soul, and that Soul did not begin with this body. It has a past full of experiences which have moulded its present conditions. The man who blinds himself to these deeper facts, to him the whole universe is a mystery; and the more he tries to find an explanation, the more he becomes confused and relentless in his judgment.

"There is a deeper fact in the soul than compensation, to wit, its own nature. The soul is not a compensation, but

a life. The soul *is*. Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of Being. Essence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole." "In the nature of the soul is the compensation for the irregularities of condition. The radical tragedy of nature seems to be the distinction of More or Less. How can Less not feel the pain; how not feel indignation or malevolence towards More? Look at those who have less faculty and one feels sad and knows not well what to make of it. He almost shuns their eye; he fears they will upbraid God. What should they do? It seems a great injustice. But see the facts nearly and these mountainous inequalities vanish. Love reduces them as the sun melts the iceberg in the sea. The heart and soul of all men being one, this bitterness of *His* and *Mine* ceases. His is mine. I am my brother and my brother is me."

These words of Emerson remind us of a beautiful passage in the Isa-Upanishad: "He who beholds all beings in the Great Self and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from It (the Self). He who perceives all beings as the Self, for him how can there be delusion or grief, when he sees oneness everywhere?" Sorrow, hatred, jealousy and all such base qualities cannot touch him. He is enveloped with one spirit only, the spirit of love. When the great understanding of the light of Truth shines in our heart, all these little feelings vanish; and in their place there is joy, and love unbounded. "We are idolaters of the old," Emerson again declares. "We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in today to rival or recreate that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs,

nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover and nerve us again. We cannot again find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, 'Up and onward for evermore!' "

Man must rise; he must not grieve over his dead actions. He must go onward and forward, if he wishes to attain the realm of perfection. He must not linger in the ruins of the past. He must not cling to material conditions which are ever-shifting. He must not base his happiness on this one little span of life. When the veil of death falls, he must not imagine that all is over, that his last opportunity is gone. Opportunities are never lacking, but we are not always ready to profit by them. The wisest thing for us is to make the best possible use of our present. We hamper our progress when we lay undue stress on the past or the future. If the present is well-lived, the future will take care of itself. But we must have wisdom and we must have strength. If we know the nature of the Soul, and are imbued with these bigger ideas, then we cannot do anything small.

We may make thousands of laws, but that will not check crime; we must lift the criminal by giving him understanding. If he knows that when he commits a crime, he hurts himself more than the one he tries to injure, he will not do it. When a man realizes that he is the maker of his own life, the maker of his own bondage; that he holds the key by which he can unlock the door and enter into the realms of lasting happiness; then we give him a new impetus to go on and he is not tempted to do things which create bondage. Vedanta does not threaten the wrongdoer with the rod of punishment; it does not tell him that he is sinful or accursed. On the contrary, it sounds the dynamic note: "O child of Immortal Bliss, it does not befit

thee to do these things which are unworthy and of the world."

Whatever we sow, whether consciously or unconsciously, must bear fruit, so we must become conscious beings. We must do more than just live somehow or other. Eating, sleeping, feeling pleasure and pain, these we have in common with the brute. If we limit our consciousness and aspiration to that narrow sphere, we are no better than the lower animals. We must lift our standard. We must do not only what benefits us here and now; we must benefit ourselves eternally. We must not merely think of this little self, we must work for our Soul. When we can live with supreme understanding, as children of God; when we can lay all actions like flowers on the altar of God; then we shall escape from reactionary bondage and all the actions we perform will lead us towards freedom even in this life.

THE SOWER

By G. O. W.

Beneath the quiet sky
A sower casts his seed upon the hill,
Where sleeping seed will wake
Obedient to the Spring's awakening will.

How strangely from Thy Hand
Across the darker fields of death and grief
Men's souls, like seed, are flung;
But will that harvest, Lord, like earth's, be brief?

Or to deep-furrowed Death
Dost Thou consign only immortal grain?
—Lay down in lonely Grief
Enduring hearts that deathless rise again?

THE CHAIN OF BIRTH AND DEATH

By Sister Devamata.

Something cannot come out of nothing. Such is the definite statement made in the Vedic Scriptures; such is also the conclusive word of modern science. We can never hope to create; we can only transform; because if one atom were added to the universe, its equilibrium would be destroyed and it would begin to crumble. Nor is this a law for the gross material world only; it applies equally to the realm of consciousness. That is why there can be "nothing new under the sun." All that is must always have been. Existence of itself is the proof of pre-existence; not merely a pre-existence of the elements which make up the form, but a pre-existence of the point of individual consciousness around which the form gathers. The sense of identity is as indestructible as the final unit of matter. No Soul could suddenly be born to fill a new form; rather the form is born out of it; that is, it springs into being in response to the need of that Soul for a certain kind of self-expression. Nor yet in the final analysis can it be said that the forms themselves are created; for they are but repetitions of eternal models or prototypes, as Plato calls them, existing in the Divine Mind.

What form the Soul takes up is determined by its state of development and by the use it has made of its previous forms. The principle is the same as that applied by any school or business house in dealing with promotion. In these periodical changes of form and environment, however, there is no question of birth or death for the Soul. A traveller who spends a few days, months or even years at each station along a line of railway, has no sense of a break in his existence when he moves from station to station; in the same way the Soul feels no check in the even flow of

its life-consciousness in passing from one body to another. It means no more, so the Bhagavad-Gita declares, than the transition in this body from childhood to youth and old age. The mistake we make is in breaking up this deep-flowing, steady stream of living into fragments which we call lives; whereas life in its real aspect is one unbroken, eternal, infinite existence.

The logical necessity for pre-existence becomes evident when we study our present earth-life; for even a little observation will show us that what we are today is the product of a pre-existence of yesterday; and if we trace our life back from one such small pre-existence to another, we shall reach a horizon line where the yesterday drops into another sphere of manifestation, out of which this one has risen, as a new flame leaps from the glowing embers when a fresh log is laid on the fire. It is not that we are, then as these self-conscious entities we cease to be, and again as other entities we come into new being. Never have we ceased to be and never shall we cease to be. The element of identity is constant and unchanging. Sometimes, however, our being is in visible gross forms; while at other times it is in subtle and invisible forms. But always we are. One of the meditations given in Yoga to strengthen this sense of identity is to carry ourselves in thought back to our babyhood and then to trace our life through condition after condition up to the present time, realizing how many different bodies we have worn even during this short span of years. Not one atom of that original body remains, scarcely one thought or desire of that infant mind. Our entire intellectual and moral outlook has altered; yet the consciousness of self-identity has never wavered. And so it will continue, firm and unshaken.

Future existence is as much a correlative of existence

as is pre-existence. Eternity must stretch equally in both directions; for as something cannot come out of nothing, by the same law it cannot go into nothing. No entity can ever become a non-entity. If today we are vividly conscious of a sense of I-ness, it cannot be annihilated. The process by which we evolve from self-consciousness to God-consciousness is not one of destruction or substitution, but of expansion. Our self-identity expands and expands until it becomes commensurate with the whole. First we awaken to a unity of interest with a group of people we call our family, and we so far identify ourselves with their welfare that we literally love them as ourself. Then this feeling widens to the community, the country, humanity, to every living creature, to the whole universe, and finally to the Infinite. We know ourselves at last as one with God, hence with no life or advantage apart from the whole. Only when we reach this point do we realize our true individuality or indivisibility; for so long as there is one atom outside our consciousness, that atom may divide it.

Life as we perceive it at present is actually an endless chain of births and deaths. At every moment we are dying in some part of our being, and at the same moment in some other part we are being reborn. Not for the flash of a second is any human life static. It rushes and swirls like a mountain torrent:—millions of germs entering in, as many millions pouring out; every atom bringing its minute load of vital energy, emptying it somewhere in the organism and hurrying on. Thoughts, too, hastening in and out; so also emotions and sensations. Perpetual movement everywhere; never-ending change, or continual birth and death, for each change implies the death of what is and the birth of something else. Every death indeed necessitates a birth; because existence being indestructible and the change

being in the form, not in the essence or substance, what leaves this place or body must reappear in some other form and place.

So long as our attachments, obligations and desires bind us to the physical universe, we cannot hope to stay this relentless alternation of births and deaths; for change is the very law and condition of material manifestation. The briefest interval of complete rest would mean stagnation and eventual dissolution. If a man holds obstinately to a falling object, he must fall with it; similarly, if we cling with the same tenacity to that which dies, we cannot escape death. On this plane we have no choice as to whether we shall live or die. We can only determine to what we shall die and to what we shall be reborn. Every instant of time represents a death or a new birth. There is not one thought, not one word, not one movement of hand or foot, not one act of moral choice, not one breath even that does not sign a death sentence or a promise of life eternal. Are we dying to that which dies and being reborn to that which is deathless? Then we may be sure that every day death is losing its power over us, and there will come a time when we shall be able to walk over the waters or through a fiery furnace unmoved. Acts of heroism will cost us nothing then; for it is the little self in us which always plays the coward. The Great Self, fully conscious of its imperishable nature, is fearless. By this unfailing attribute of fearlessness, indeed, we may recognize the knowers of the Divine, so the Upanishads tell us.

Now we tremble when any danger threatens the body because deep down in our hearts we identify our life with it. What exists besides seems to us too cloudlike and intangible to rest our faith upon. But one who has shifted his point of self-identity to his spiritual being can say

with all sincerity, as did Sri Ramakrishna when reproached for expending his physical energies so recklessly for others: "I would gladly give twenty thousand bodies to save one Soul." For such a lover the safety and care of the tiniest insect will seem of grave importance, because he will see its small life as an integral part of the Great Life. To him it will be a little brother groping in the blind helplessness of babyhood. So St. Francis felt towards the birds. Such was the feeling of Buddha as He begged the king to take Him for the sacrifice in place of those terrified goats. Their bleatings sounded in His ears as the voices of little children of God crying to Him, an elder Son, for succor. Could He fail them? The story is told in India of a Brahmin, who going to a well found a scorpion struggling in the water. With some effort he rescued it and held it against his breast to revive it, but it stung him. As soon as he laid it on the ground, it crawled back to the edge and fell in again. A second time he drew it out and warmed it against his breast, and a second time it stung him. So also a third time.

Such will be the patient compassion in our hearts towards all living things when we rise above the enslaving fear of death. Every nervous start, every recoil from pain or hurt is in reality this fear in subtler disguise. It thwarts our finest impulses towards self-sacrifice and noble action. If we were fully convinced that we were indestructible, we could face any danger or deprivation for even the meanest creature; but life being our most precious treasure, something within us drives us irresistibly to safeguard it and whatever contributes towards it. We call this a natural instinct of self-preservation, but it is a very primary and distorted form; because the only self within us that can be preserved is the undying Soul, and that can never

suffer harm or loss. An acquaintance with this Divine and Eternal Principle of our being, alone will release us from the haunting dread of death. For this reason Jesus taught: "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth will make you free?" Free from what? From the bondage of birth and death and all the deadening limitations of gross matter.

At whatever point we touch Truth, there we touch immortal life; because Truth and existence are one. The path of liberation, therefore, is the path of knowledge—knowledge of the Higher Self first and through that, knowledge of God. "Those men who have no faith in this science of Self-knowledge, without attaining Me, return to the path of death and rebirth," it is said in the Gita. We must find something within us which defies time, space and causation; a something which not merely contains life, but which is life. It is plain that the body does not meet these requirements; nor yet the mind or character; for all are subject to the conditioning effects of time and space, and are bound by the law of causation. That something must lie deeper in the abysses of our being; and mere intellectual reasoning cannot penetrate to it, because it lies beyond. That which is life can be gained only by living. It is not enough to recognize that we are not the body; we must live as if we were not; that is, we must not make it the central motive in all our activity. We must not feel that our happiness depends on its comfort and pleasure; that our daily routine must be shaped according to its momentary state. We must look at it objectively, while we remain the subject; in other words, we must cultivate the attitude of a witness towards it, taking care of it as a good workman does his instrument, but never yielding to its caprices or identifying ourselves with it.

Then once more we must push back the point of self-

identity by objectifying our subtle body, that closer covering of mind, intellect and ego which still wraps the Soul when the gross body falls off. To confound our real being with this is as grave an error as to think ourselves one with our hands and feet or our senses. We must look upon it only as a finer tool to work with; a tool, however, of such intrinsic value that we cannot afford to neglect it or use it unwisely. The surest way to make it effective and also to detach ourselves from it, is to practise evenness of mind and mood. We must not let our consciousness sway and swing with each passing pain or pleasure, each chance word of praise or blame. The rythmic play of opposites — heat and cold, light and darkness, the pleasant and the unpleasant—is inevitable on this plane. It is foolish to suppose that we can check it; but what we can check is our reaction against it. The Bhagavad-Gita teaches that he who remains serene and unafflicted by these outer changes is the only one fitted to attain immortality. The reason of this is apparent, because to rise above them is to rise above our mortal nature. Only in the Soul can man "make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm."

Serenity is as essential to clear inner vision as is steadiness to accurate outer sight; and we gain this serenity, not by trying to alter the universe or by denying the presence of those things in it which disturb our equilibrium, but by calmly viewing all things as they are and remaining unafflicted. This does not mean insensibility; rather it implies a keener, more refined perception; because the practice of dispassion is well-nigh impossible unless beneath all these storms of good and evil, joy and sorrow, failure and success, we are able to perceive still depths of Infinite Wisdom, Infinite Love and Infinite Power to which we can unquestioningly entrust ourselves and all that

is. There is a vital distinction between pain and suffering. Pain is the warning cry of nature when some abnormal condition rises in the system, and may exist when, as in sleep, we are not conscious of it. Suffering comes as a voluntary reaction against it; "kicking against the pricks," as St. Paul puts it. Nothing so quickly reduces our aches and disquietudes to a minimum as to meet them with non-resistance and surrender. Nor will this cheat us of any lesson to be learned from them; for the greatest lesson to be gained from any human experience is to learn how to rise above it.

Growth in dispassion and serenity leads naturally to growth in Self-knowledge; for as the surface of the mind becomes calm, the reflection of the Soul within is no longer broken and distorted, and man beholds the perfect image of his true nature shining in glory. Then by its transcendent light, as by a lamp, "he will see the real nature of the Supreme," we are told in the Svetasvatara-Upanishad; "and having known the unborn, eternal God, he is freed from all fetters. For when God is known, all fetters fall off, sufferings are destroyed, and birth and death cease."

THE THIRST FOR PLEASURE

From the Teachings of Buddha

Make thyself an island, work hard, be wise! When thine impurities are blown away and thou art free from guilt, thou wilt not enter again into birth and decay.

The thirst of a thoughtless man grows like a creeper; he runs from life to life, like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest.

Whomsoever this fierce poisonous thirst overcomes in this world, his sufferings increase like the abounding Birana grass.

But from him who overcomes this fierce thirst, difficult to be conquered in this world, sufferings fall off like water drops from a lotus leaf.

The channels (of pleasure) run everywhere, the creeper of passion is sprouting; if Thou seest this creeper springing up, cut its root by means of knowledge.

Given up to pleasure and deriving happiness therefrom, men again and again undergo birth and decay.

That fetter the wise call strong which drags down, which yields but is difficult to undo; after having cut this at last, people rise above the world, free from cares and leaving the pleasures of attachment behind.

Those who are slaves to passion run down the stream of desires as a spider runs down the web which he has himself made; when they have cut this, the wise go onwards, free from cares, leaving all pain behind.

If thy mind is altogether free, thou wilt not again enter into birth and decay.

If a man is tossed about by doubts, full of strong passions and yearning only for what is pleasant, his thirst will grow more and more and he will indeed make his fetters strong.

If a man delights in quieting his doubts and, always reflecting, does not turn from the unpleasant, he will certainly remove, nay, he will cut the fetter of Mara.

He who has reached the goal, who is fearless, who is without thirst and without taint, he has broken all the thorns of life.

He who never identifies himself with name and form and does not grieve over what is gone, he is indeed a true follower of the law.

Him I call a Brahmana (a God-knower) who has left behind human pleasures and passed beyond heavenly pleasures and is free from all hunger for enjoyment.

Him I call a Brahmana who has no selfish interests and when he has understood the truth does not say, How, how? and who has reached the depth of the Immortal.

Him I call a Brahmana who has risen above the bondage of good and evil; who is free from grief, from sin and impurity.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who is bright like the moon, pure, serene, undisturbed.

Him indeed I call a Brahmana who has risen above what gives pleasure and what gives pain, who is calm and free from the germ of rebirth: the hero and conqueror of all the worlds.

Stop the stream valiantly, drive away desire, O Brahmana! When thou hast understood the destructible nature of all that was made, thou wilt understand that which was not made.

All bonds vanish from one who has obtained that knowledge.

We find ourselves in the position for which we are fit, each ball finds its own hole; and if one has some capacity above another, the world will find this out too in the universal adjusting that goes on. So it is no use to grumble. If there is a rich man who is wicked, there must be in that man certain qualities which make him rich. What is the use of fighting and complaining? That will not help us to better things. He who grumbles at the little thing that has fallen to his lot to do will grumble at everything. Always grumbling, he will lead a miserable life and everything will be a failure. But that man who does his duty as he goes, putting his shoulder to the wheel, will see the light and higher and higher duties will fall to his share.

—Swami Vivekananda.

THE ART OF LIFE

From the Teachings of Chuang Tzu

Those who understand the conditions of life devote no attention to things which life cannot accomplish. Those who understand the conditions of destiny devote no attention to things over which knowledge has no control. For the due nourishment of our physical frames, certain things are needful. Yet where such things abound, the physical frame is not always nourished. For the preservation of life it is necessary that there should be no abandonment of the physical frame. Yet where the physical frame is not abandoned, life does not always remain.

Life comes, and cannot be declined. It goes, and cannot be stopped. But alas! the world thinks that to nourish the frame is enough to keep life. And if indeed it is not enough, what then is the world to do? Although not enough, it must still be done. It cannot be neglected. For if one is to neglect the physical frame, better far to retire at once from the world. By renouncing the world, one gets rid of the cares of the world. The result is a natural level, which is equivalent to a re-birth. And he who is reborn is near to realization.

Lieh Tzu asked Kuan Yin, saying: "The perfect man can walk through solid bodies without obstruction. He can pass through fire without being burnt. He can scale the loftiest heights without fear. How does he bring himself to do this?"

"It is because he is in a condition of absolute purity," replied Kuan Yin. "It is not cunning which enables him to dare such feats. Be seated and I will tell you. All that has form, sound, colour may be classed under the head *thing*. Man differs so much from the rest and stands at the head of all things simply because the latter are but what they appear and nothing more. But man can attain to form-

lessness and vanquish death. And with that which is in possession of the eternal, how can mere things compare?

"Man may rest in the eternal fitness; he may abide in the everlasting; and roam from the beginning to the end of all creation. He may bring his nature to a condition of one; he may nourish his strength; he may harmonize his virtue, and so put himself into partnership with God. Then, when his divinity is thus assured and his spirit closed in on all sides, how can anything find a passage within?

"A drunken man who falls out of a cart, though he may suffer, does not die. His bones are the same as other people's, but he meets his accident in a different way. His spirit is in a position of security. He is not conscious of riding in the cart, neither is he conscious of falling out of it. Ideas of life, death, fear, etc., cannot penetrate his breast; and so he does not suffer from contact with objective existences. And if such security is to be got from wine, how much more is it to be got from God. It is in God that the Sage seeks his refuge and so he is free from harm.

"An avenger does not snap in twain the murderous weapon; neither does the most spiteful man carry his resentment to a tile which may have hit him on the head. And by the extension of this principle, the empire would be at peace; no more confusion of war, no more punishment of death. Do not develop your artificial intelligence, but develop that intelligence which is from God. From the latter, results virtue; from the former, cunning. And those who do not shrink from the natural, nor wallow in the artificial, they are near to perfection."

A certain Sun Hsiu went to the house of Pien Ch'ing Tzu and complained, saying: "In peace I am not considered wanting in propriety. In times of trouble I am not con-

sidered wanting in courage. Yet my crops fail; and officially I am not a success. From my village an outcast, I am an outlaw from my State. How have I offended against God that He should visit me with such a fate?"

"Have you not heard," replied Pien Tzu, "how the perfect man conducts himself? He is oblivious of his physical organization. He is beyond the reach of sight and hearing. He moves outside the limits of this dusty world, rambling transcendentally in the domain of no-affairs. This is called acting, but not from self-confidence; influencing, but not from authority. But you, you make a show of your knowledge in order to startle fools. You cultivate yourself in contrast to the degradation of others. And you blaze along as though the sun and moon were under your arms. Whereas, that you have a whole body in a whole skin and have not perished in mid-career, dumb, blind, or halt, but actually hold a place among men—this ought to be enough for you. Why rail at God? Begone!"

Confucius was looking at the cataract at Lüliang. It fell from a height of thirty jen and its foam reached forty li away. No scaly, finny creature could enter therein. Yet Confucius saw an old man go in, and thinking that he was suffering from some trouble and desirous of ending his life, bade a disciple run along the side to try to save him. The old man emerged about a hundred paces off and with flowing hair went carolling along the bank. Confucius followed him and said: "I had thought, sir, you were a spirit, but now I see you are a man. Kindly tell me, is there any way to deal thus with water?"

"No," replied the old man, "I have no way. There was my original condition to begin with; then habit growing into nature; and lastly acquiescence in destiny. Plunging in with the whirl, I come out with the swirl. I accommo-

date myself to the water, not the water to me. And so I am able to deal with it after this fashion."

"What do you mean," enquired Confucius, "by your original condition to begin with, habit growing into nature, and acquiescence in destiny?"

"I was born," replied the old man, "upon dry land, and accommodated myself to dry land. That was my original condition. Growing up on the water, I accommodated myself to the water. That was what I meant by nature. And doing as I did without being conscious of any effort so to do, that was what I meant by destiny."

The divine man trusts to the natural development of events. He does not strive to introduce the artificial into the domain of the natural. Accordingly, life is a gain and death a loss, or death is a gain and life a loss (according to the circumstances) . . . If men revere them (these wise ones) they rejoice not. If men insult them, they are not angered. But only those who have passed into the eternal harmony of God are capable of this.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda's visit to Seattle met with overwhelming success. During the few days he spent there he delivered eleven public lectures and held seven private classes. There was an overflowing attendance at all. Although the capacity of the hall for one series of lectures was two hundred and fifty and that of the other three hundred and fifty, all available space even on the platform was crowded at each meeting and large numbers were turned away. On one occasion over one hundred people could not obtain entrance. The Swami was obliged also to devote many hours each day to interviews. Besides these evidences of the interest aroused, many hundreds of books and pamphlets were sold and the subscription list of the Mes-

sage was appreciably lengthened. There was an insistent demand for a permanent Centre, but the Swami did not feel it possible to consider it for the present. Although the lectures and classes followed in quick succession, always one and sometimes two a day, a large and earnest nucleus of the same people came regularly, giving up other engagements in order to do so. One of these, in sending a book order to the Boston Centre, writes: "Swami Paramananda left yesterday for Portland. He was in Seattle two short weeks. We all appreciated his visit so much and I trust he will establish a Vedanta Centre here. I am sure there are a great many people interested. Many evenings we were not able to seat all the people who came to hear him. Words are not adequate to express our delight in having the privilege of attending these lectures and meditation classes. The Swami's teachings are so broad, practical and full of uplifting Truth."

It was also arranged that the Swami should deliver three lectures in Tacoma—one at the prison—but owing to the pressure of engagements in Seattle he was obliged to cancel two of these. He left Seattle on the 10th of April, delivered three lectures in Portland, and after a brief stop in San Francisco, arrived in Los Angeles on the morning of the 18th. On the following day he gave a first lecture at the Vedanta Centre, established there by him two years ago, and on Sunday the 21st began a course of public lectures at Symphony Hall. His work will continue there for the present as in previous years.

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston all Services and Classes were held as usual during April, being conducted by Sister Devamata in the Swami's absence. The attendance remained excellent throughout the month. During May there will be no change in the schedule of meetings.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

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TENTH SEASON—1918

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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ATMAN AND OVER-SOUL

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

(Series on Emerson and Vedanta)

Whether God and Soul are myths or facts is a question which has been discussed in all ages by all the thinking minds of the world; and although sages and mystics have proved it by their own light, this cannot reveal it to others who have not the same light. "Every man's words who speaks from that life must sound vain to those who do not dwell in the same thought on their own part," Emerson writes. "I dare not speak for it. My words do not carry its august sense; they fall short and cold. Only itself can inspire whom it will, and behold! their speech shall be lyrical and sweet, and universal as the rising of the wind." In similar words Yama, the Lord of Death, speaks to Nachiketas in the Katha-Upanishad. "This Atman cannot be attained by mere study of the Scriptures, nor by intellectual perception, nor by frequent hearing of It; he whom the Self chooses, by him alone is It attained. To him the Self reveals Its true nature. But he who has not turned away from evil conduct, whose senses are uncontrolled, who is not tranquil, whose mind is not at rest, he can never attain this Self even by knowledge." That is, unless a man lives the life and develops his higher

spiritual faculties, mere intellectual knowledge cannot help him much. As Emerson says again:

"The philosophy of six thousand years has not searched the chambers and magazines of the soul. In its experiments there has always remained, in the last analysis, a risiduum it could not resolve. Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Our being is descending into us from we know not whence. The most exact calculator has no prescience that somewhat incalculable may not balk the next moment. I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine. . . . We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime in man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty; to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One. And this deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object are one."

The ancient Vedic Scriptures abound in passages describing in almost identical terms the relation of the phenomenal world with the Unseen One, and the connection of the Soul with its origin — that One without a second. Nowhere does Vedanta deal with the universe as a combination of unrelated fragments; it sees all things as parts of a great whole and it tries to bind all these parts together in that whole, yet without destroying the entity of each individual Soul. Therefore, before we can define our relation with the world, we must discover our relation with its Source. That is, we must project our mind beyond this little span of self-consciousness and learn to know our real Self. In the philosophy of the Vedas we find a clear distinction made between what man calls his

self and the Over-Soul; the *Jivatman* and the *Paramatman*, the individual self and the Supreme Self; or between the apparent man and the real man. Man is the reflection of God; but the reflection cannot exist without the object reflected; so man must know what God is, if he would know himself. This has been the search down the ages and this search must be made by every individual for himself; there is no one who can answer this question for another. Because of this it ever remains a hidden mystery. It is true that certain philosophies and ethical systems, like the Buddhistic, drop the self entirely; but the self they drop is the man of name, form and limitations. And it is necessary to do this, because we can never be wholly possessor of our eternal being until we drop the consciousness of mundane things.

What is the *Atman* or Self? In the Kena-Upanishad it is defined as "the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of the speech, the life of the life, the eye of the eye. That which cannot be thought by mind, but by which mind is able to think; that which is not seen by the eye, but by which the eye is able to see; that which cannot be heard by the ear, but by which the ear is able to hear." Emerson draws almost the same picture when he writes: "All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet; is not in faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being, in which they lie, an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all. A

man is the facade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide. What we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, planting, counting man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love. And the blindness of the intellect begins when it would be something of itself. The weakness of the will begins when the individual would be something of himself. All reform aims in some one particular to let the soul have its way through us; in other words, to engage us to obey.

"Of this pure nature every man is at some time sensible. Language cannot paint it with his colors. It is too subtile. It is undefinable, unmeasurable; but we know that it pervades and contains us. We know that all spiritual being is in man. A wise old proverb says, 'God comes to see us without bell'; that is, as there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul, where man, the effect, ceases and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God. Justice we see and know, Love, Freedom, Power. These natures no man ever got above, but they tower over us, and most in the moment when our interests tempt us to wound them."

The eating, drinking, sleeping man thinks his whole life is contained in his physical being. His miseries to him are great realities; his hands and feet, his eyes, nose, these various bodily organs seem all-important; while he overlooks that by which he is living, acting and thinking.

When we descend to this state of consciousness, we inevitably misrepresent ourselves. As soon as we forget our Soul-nature, we become selfish entities; we think that to find happiness we must deceive or override our fellow-men, and do everything for our own gain and gratification. But the real man within, who is majestic and free from all sense of competition and rivalry, turns away from fleeting mundane vanities, because he knows that his true being is of God. "The influence of the senses has, in most men, overpowered the mind to that degree that the walls of time and space have come to look real and insurmountable; and to speak with levity of these limits is, in the world, the sign of insanity. Yet time and space are but inverse measures of the force of the soul." "See how the deep divine thought reduces centuries and milleniums, and makes itself present through all ages. Is the teaching of Christ less effective now than it was when first his mouth was opened? The emphasis of facts and persons in my thought has nothing to do with time. And so, always, the soul's scale is one; the scale of the senses and the understanding is another. Before the revelations of the soul, time, space and Nature shrink away."

How like these words of Emerson is the passage in the Svetasvatara-Upanishad: "When the light of the Atman or Self has risen, there is no day, no night, neither existence nor non-existence. For the sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all this is lightened. He makes all. He knows all, the self-caused, the knower, the Time of time!" Spiritual verities can never be matters of tradition. We can never believe in things until we become acquainted with them through our own direct perception. No one

can make us believe that we have a Soul until we become aware of it ourselves. Theoretical knowledge is not dependable knowledge. Even a small amount of knowledge based on direct apprehension is a far surer guide than the greatest amount of learning. Intellectual knowledge leads us into an ever-increasing tangle of diversity; while direct vision always simplifies and leads to fundamental unity. As Emerson again declares:

"The mind is one; and the best minds who love truth for its own sake, think much less of property in truth. They accept it thankfully everywhere, and do not label or stamp it with any man's name, for it is theirs long beforehand, and from eternity. The learned and the studious of thought have no monopoly of wisdom. Their violence of direction in some degree disqualifies them to think truly. We owe many valuable observations to people who are not very acute or profound, and who say the thing without effort, which we want and have long been hunting in vain. The action of the soul is oftener in that which is left unsaid, than in that which is said in any conversation."

Here Emerson strikes the same universal note which sounds through all Vedic teaching, that Truth is not the exclusive property of any one group of people, but is the common property of the whole human race and equally open to all who can claim it. Whoever is open to Truth does not care from what source it comes. It is Truth, that is sufficient. He does not try to label it. If we love God above all things and seek to be united with Him, no divisions or distinctions can exist for us. The Lord abides equally in every heart and when we see Him there, all barriers of exclusiveness must fall. God is One, Truth is One, the Infinite Spirit is One. There is but one great

family and God is the presiding head of that family. Until we recognize this and feel in our hearts that He is our real Father or Mother, we cannot be fully open to the higher revelation. Lofty spiritual Truth exists irrespective of time or place. It always stands there; and when people are ready to receive it, it unfolds itself to them. "We are wiser than we know," Emerson says. "If we will not interfere with our thought, but will act entirely, or see how the thing stands in God, we know the particular thing, and every thing, and every man. For the maker of all things and all persons stands behind us and casts his dread omniscience through us over things."

Few possess a pure spiritual sense, and one who has it, because he speaks and acts differently from others, stands out from among men; and people interpret this peculiarity as insanity. Emerson speaks of this also. "A certain tendency to insanity," he writes, "has always attended the opening of the religious sense in men, as if they had been 'blasted with excess of light.' The trances of Socrates, the 'union' of Plotinus, the vision of Porphyry, the conversion of Paul, the aurora of Behmen, the convulsions of George Fox and his Quakers, the illumination of Swedenborg, are of this kind. . . . Revelation is the disclosure of the soul. The popular notion of a revelation is that it is a telling of fortunes. In past oracles of the soul the understanding seeks to find answers to sensual questions and undertakes to tell from God how long men shall exist, what their hands shall do and who shall be their company, adding names and dates and places. But we must pick no locks. We must check this low curiosity."

When man seeks light, not for what it will bring him in the form of health, prosperity or success, but for it-

self, then alone will it come. Only when love of the Soul leads him upward and onward will he attain it. In no other way can he gain communion with the Eternal Spirit. At every step of life two paths confront us. One leads Godward; the other towards the world. The wise, distinguishing between the two, chooses the Real and Eternal; while the ignorant, preferring that which brings immediate and tangible results, chooses the lower path. The one moves inward, the other moves outward. "The self-existent created the senses outgoing; for this reason man sees the external world, but not the inner Atman or Self. Some wise men, however, desiring immortality, with eyes turned away from the external, see the Great Self within."

Bearing out this statement of the Vedic Scriptures, Emerson says: "The great distinction between teachers sacred or literary — between poets like Herbert and poets like Pope; between philosophers like Spinoza, Kant and Coleridge and philosophers like Locke, Mackintosh and Stewart; between men of the world who are reckoned accomplished talkers and here and there a fervent mystic, prophesying, half insane under the infinitude of his thought — is that one class speaks *from within*, or from experience, as parties and possessors of the fact, and the other class *from without*, as spectators merely, or perhaps as acquainted with the fact on the evidence of third persons. It is no use to preach to me from without. I can do that too easily for myself. Jesus speaks always from within and in a degree that transcends all others. In that is the miracle."

The same attitude is to be found among the Indo-Aryans. Mere scholarship has never been considered by them an essential qualification for a spiritual teacher. He must

be one who knows, who is directly acquainted with the higher facts of life; not one who can fill the brain with theories about God. The real spiritual genius is not dependent on any outer support, his strength comes from the Fountainhead. If I go to a man who is only brilliant intellectually, he may satisfy me for a moment, but afterwards the mind seems more confused. If, on the contrary, I go to a man who has the light of higher understanding, he may perhaps speak only one word, but that word will prove to be a seed which will spring up and bear fruit. As Emerson puts it: "The tone of seeking is one and the tone of having is another." If a man "have not found his home in God, his manners, his form of speech, the turn of his sentences, the build, shall I say, of all his opinions will involuntarily confess it, let him brave it out how he will. If he have found his centre, the Deity will shine through him, through all the disguises of ignorance, of ungenial temperament, of unfavorable circumstance."

The eternal Self, it is true, dwells in the heart of every mortal, but it is to be attained only in a state of consciousness where reason cannot reach. When, however, the mind is concentrated and turned within, then the mortal perceives the glory of the immortal Self and "rejoices, because he has obtained that which is the cause of all true joy," as it is said in the Katha-Upanishad. Emerson also writes: "Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul. The simplest person who in his integrity worships God, becomes God; yet for ever and ever the influx of this better and universal self is new and unsearchable. It inspires awe and astonishment. When we have broken our god of tradition and ceased from our god of rhetoric, then may God fire the heart with his

presence. It is the doubling of the heart itself, nay, the infinite enlargement of the heart with a power of growth to a new infinity on every side." Also in the Upanishads we read: "The knower of Brahman (the Supreme) becomes like unto Brahman."

When a man enters the chamber of his Soul, he may enter as a man, but he comes out transformed. A man cannot help going wrong and making mistakes as long as he is ignorant of his true nature. The only aid we can give him is to kindle in him the higher sense of the reality of God and his own Soul. When he is able to perceive this, it will then not be possible for him to be dragged down by the unrealities of this world. So long as man is conscious only of his little self, he will be self-conceited; but let him come under the dominion of the Great Self and at once his consciousness will expand and carry him beyond the limits of selfish thought and action.

There can be little question that Emerson was strongly imbued with the spirit of the Upanishads when he wrote his essay on the *Over-Soul*. The title itself indicates it, for "Over-Soul" is almost a literal translation of the Sanskrit word *Param-atman* (Supreme Lord). The very expressions as well as the thought contained in the essay are all akin to those found in the Indo-Aryan Scriptures. But this does not imply that they were borrowed. Emerson undoubtedly drew his inspiration from the Vedas; yet it was his own spiritual genius which enabled him to grasp the lofty ideals they proclaim, and give them out with such masterful power. When great men study the Scriptures of the world, it does not unsettle their understanding or rob them of their own true faith, but it makes them see the universality of Truth and leads them to unite all the varying expressions of Truth into one great

whole. Whenever spiritual seeking becomes an all-absorbing passion of our Soul, we are inevitably released from all doctrinal and creed-bound beliefs and are brought face to face with the great cosmic, universal and all-abiding Truth.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUPREME

Selection from the Mundaka-Upanishad

By truthfulness, by penance, right knowledge and abstinence must that Self be gained; the Self whom spotless anchorites gain is pure and like a light within the body.

The true prevails, not the untrue; by the true the path is laid out, the way of the gods *(devayanah)*, on which the old sages, satisfied in their desires, proceed to where there is that highest place of the True One.

That shines forth grand, divine, inconceivable, smaller than the small. It is far beyond what is far and yet near; It is hidden in the cave (of the heart) among those who see It even here.

He is not apprehended by the eye, nor by speech, nor by the other senses, nor by penance or good works. When a man's nature has become purified by the serene light of knowledge, then he sees Him, meditating on Him as without parts.

That subtle Self is to be known by thought, there where Prana has entered five-fold; for every thought of men is interwoven with the senses; and when thought is purified, then the Self arises.

He (the knower of the Self) knows that highest home of Brahman (the Supreme) in which all is contained and shines brightly. The wise who, without desiring happiness, worship that Being, transcend this seed (they are not born again).

He who forms desires in his mind, is born again through his desires here and there. But to him whose desires are fulfilled and who is conscious of his true Self, all desires vanish, even here on earth.

When they have reached Him, the sages become satisfied through knowledge; they are conscious of their Self, their passions have passed away, and they are tranquil. The wise, having reached Him who is present everywhere, devoted to the Self, enter into Him wholly.

As the flowing rivers disappear in the sea, losing their name and form; thus a wise man, freed from name and form, goes to the Divine Being, who is greater than the great.

He who knows that highest Brahman, becomes even Brahman. He overcomes grief, he overcomes evil; free from the fetters of the heart, he becomes immortal.

LOVE OF SELF

Class Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

In this world nothing is so dear to us as our own self. Other loves are secondary; love for ourself is primary. But why do we love our own self more than anything in the universe? To answer this question we must first know what we love and what we do not love. We love beautiful things, not that which is ugly. We love sweet words, not harsh ones. We love those who are pleasing to us, not those who displease us. We love good dishes, not unsavory ones. We love to be in the cool shade of a wide-spreading tree, not out on the burning desert. In short, we love whatever harmonizes with our nature; we do not love that which does not agree with it. What has the power to make us happy, that we love. What has not the power to make us happy, that we hate. We do not

like a sharp-tongued man or woman, we do not like repulsive sights, we do not like harsh sounds, because they do not make us happy.

If, then, love is based on the power to give me happiness, and I love myself most, then I must have the power to give myself the greatest happiness. I must be the most pleasing thing to myself in the universe. And since I never cease to love myself, no matter how much I grow, there must be within me a source of happiness on which I can call indefinitely. I see therefore that what the sages tell me must be true — that I am the abode of eternal happiness. "You are not three and a half cubits in length," they say, "full of troubles and miseries, as you imagine yourself to be. Bliss is your nature. You think you are helpless, that you are dependent on the world for everything; whereas you are by your very nature all-blissful." This self which I know, however, is certainly not all-blissful. It does not always please me or make me happy. It cannot be this self, then, that I love. On the contrary, as I begin to know myself better, I find that this thing which I call myself is the real cause of all my misfortunes and sufferings. In it is localized all that which limits and deludes me. It is the real seat of ignorance or Maya, and only as I get rid of the idea of ego does Maya lose its hold on me.

This is true. Pull out the foundations and the whole house will collapse. Similarly take away the ego and the whole structure of Maya will fall. Now you think you are one with the body; that you have risen somewhere and you must set somewhere; that you are man or woman, weak or strong, Brahmin or non-Brahmin. These are all the qualifications of the ego; and if you analyze, you will find that they all rest on the body, so

that ego and body must be one. But you existed before the body and you are going to exist after the body; therefore you cannot be the body, hence the ego is not you. In this way you can rid yourself of the idea of ego. And once you have gone behind the ego, in a trice Maya and egoism will vanish. Then you will realize the state of perfect calmness and know yourself to be something which is neither the body, nor the mind, nor the ego. To do this, however, you must go beyond all these to the eternal reality of your nature. And when you can do that, you will begin to know what happiness means. Then all the world will seem nothing to you but a playground. The whole universe will be a vast stage and you will play your part of man or woman, Brahmin or non-Brahmin, with the same gusto as a king plays the part of a sweeper in the theatre of his palace.

Now if some one asks: "Who are you?" you reply: "I am Mr. So-and-So, with such a name, belonging to such a family; I am tall or short, fair or dark, ill or well." And you keep thinking: "If I do not get food, I will die of starvation; if I do not get water, that will kill me; if I do not get air, I will smother." To jump suddenly from this habit of thought to that other pole — that you are infinite — is not possible in a moment. You will say: "I am feeling hungry at this instant; how can you tell me I have no hunger? I am just now suffering from thirst, how can you say that I am not thirsty?" Intellectually it is easy to grasp, this idea that you are infinite; but when it comes to practice it is very difficult, for you are sure that you must earn your living, that you must seek the favor of this one who can help you find a position, or of that other who can procure for you some other advantage. You cannot suddenly form a totally new habit of thought; the change must be gradual.

There was once an opium-eater who came to a wise physician to be cured of his weakness. "My dear fellow," the physician said, "you have been in the habit of taking such a large quantity of opium ever day, it will not be possible for you to give up all at once. But do this: Weigh the amount you take each day with a piece of chalk on the other scale, but before you put the chalk on the scale, always draw a line with it on the floor." The patient did this, and at the end of six months he found that the piece of chalk had been reduced to half its original size and also the quantity of opium he took. By the end of the year the chalk was gone and the man had completely broken himself of the habit. So everything should be done gradually. We cannot all at once think that we are not the body. As long as we believe that our happiness comes through the senses, we shall love it and cling to it. When, however, we begin to realize that if we get some pleasure through our sense life, we also get much misery, then we shall begin to look elsewhere. So by degrees, as we search for the source of happiness in us, or as we try to find that thing in us which makes us love ourself, we shall move back through layer after layer of our being until we reach our real nature, that Atman or Self on which our existence rests. Then the bondage of our lower nature will be broken.

It is the greatest relief when we get rid of egoism. It feels as if a heavy burden had rolled off from us. At once all our doubts, fears, anxieties and troubles disappear. When the "I" is gone, then nothing remains but God. Let Him exist alone in His glory. Why should I — this little I — do anything? All is He, and He is perfect, full, complete. Deny the ego. It is the cause of all our miseries. This egoism is the real hell-fire. What in the West they

call Satan, we Hindus call ego. All forms of selfishness and suffering spring from it. To be rid of it is *Mukti* or freedom.

When man gains the consciousness of his pure Soul-nature, he becomes perfectly happy. That one has freed himself from slavery who knows that all the things which he wants are to be found inside himself, not outside; for then all want ceases, and want eats into man not only in this life, but in all lives to come. If then everything we want is inside, if we have there an inexhaustible fountain of bliss, is it not foolish to keep all our interests on the outside — our pleasures, our pursuits, our companions, all outside ourselves? So long as we do this, we shall never get rid of our miseries and taste true happiness. As the Bhagavad-Gita declares: "He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within and whose light is within, that Yogi, being wholly united with Brahman (the Supreme), attains to freedom absolute. Only he whose heart is detached from external experiences, tastes the happiness which is to be found in the (Highest) Self alone."

THE TWO WAYS

From the Apocryphal Epistle of Barnabas

(Barnabas was a companion and fellow-preacher of St. Paul)

There are two ways of doctrine and power, the one of light, the other of darkness.

Now, the way of light is this:

Thou shalt be simple in heart and rich in spirit. Thou shalt not cleave to those that walk in the way of death. Thou shalt turn from that which is not pleasing unto God. Thou shalt abhor all dissimulation. Thou shalt not neglect any of the commands of the Lord.

Thou shalt not exalt thyself, but shalt be humble. Thou shalt not take honor to thyself. Thou shalt not enter into any wicked counsel against thy neighbor. Thou shalt not be over-confident in thy heart.

Thou shalt be gentle. Thou shalt be quiet. Thou shalt not keep any hatred in thy heart against thy brother. . . Thou shalt love thy brother above thine own Soul.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, neither shalt thou be an extortioner. Neither shall thy heart be joined to proud men; but thou shalt be numbered among the righteous and the lowly. Whatever events shall happen unto thee, thou shalt receive them as good.

Thou shalt not be double-minded or double-tongued; for a double tongue is the snare of death.

Thou shalt not be bitter in thy commands towards any one of thy servants that trust in God, because He came not to call any with respect of persons, but whomsoever the spirit had prepared.

Thou shalt share with thy neighbors of all thou hast; thou shalt not call anything thine own; for if ye partake in such things as are incorruptible, how much more should ye do it in those that are corruptible?

Thou shalt not be forward to speak; for the mouth is the snare of death. Strive for thy Soul with all thy might.

Thou shalt love as the apple of thine eye every one that speaketh unto thee the Word of the Lord. Thou shalt seek out every day the persons of the righteous.

Thou shalt judge righteous judgments. Thou shalt never cause divisions, but shalt make peace between those that are at variance and bring them together.

Thou shalt confess thy sins, and not come to thy prayer with an evil conscience.

This is the way of light.

WATERS OF LIFE

By J. P. Dabney

It happened to me once, in my journey through the world, to come to a broad highway whereon were travelling a great multitude of diverse manners of people.

There were old people and young people; folk richly attired and beggars in rags; strong, lusty people shoulder to shoulder with crippled and deformed ones, who had to limp along heavily by the aid of crutch or staff. Many of this company bore vessels in their hands; one a golden flagon, another an earthen vase, another a mean cup, and so on. Some had only broken sherds and fragments of vessels, and the major part of them carried nothing. All faces were turned one way, and, cheerfully or dolefully as it might be, all were moving, slower or faster, in one direction.

I was astonished at the sight, and asked of one and another:

"Who be all these folk that travel so determinedly? and whether do they go?" to which all called back:

"Come drink, come drink."

Then I perceived near to me a tall old man of serene countenance, who walked along with the aid of a staff whereon was scrolled in runic letters the word "Meditation," and him I accosted.

"Fair sir, will you tell me whereunto all this great company is travelling?"

He, smiling slowly, made answer:

"They have heard of the Waters of Life, to drink of which makes men immortal, and they go forward to seek for them."

"And where may these Waters of Life be met with?" I persisted, "and do you know your way thither?"

"Peradventure not wholly," he returned; "but we have signs which we follow for a season, and then we discern other signs that lead us further."

"It seemeth, sooth, a weary way," I said; "and how shall all these folk who carry no cups drink of the Waters when they be found?"

"They will make cups of their own linked hands and that is the best of all. It mattereth nothing how we drink, so long as we do drink," he replied gravely and hurried along.

There seemed to me something of moment in all this adventure and my heart warmed to it, so I fitted my paces to the others' and followed along with them. What nor where might be these Waters of Life, I knew nothing, but the humor was upon me to find out.

A weary way we travelled. Dust parched us and untoward winds chilled us. Many grew faint-hearted and dropped by the wayside, complaining: "It is but a mirage. There *are* no Waters of Life!" Others, of frivolous mind, espied across the fields afar companies of folk dancing or carousing or otherwise making merry; and this sight so inflamed their own desires that they forthwith forgot the object of their quest and leaped the quickest hedges and raced away to join the revellers. Others still there were, who, going a little apart, planted their staves, as they might be trees, into the ground, and sat themselves down there beside in a sort of complacent satisfaction. And upon one staff would be scrolled the word "Creed"; upon another the word "Church," upon still another "Ritual," and so on. And to all who questioned why they thus did they would return the same answer:

"The umbrage of these trees affordeth us all shelter. We are satisfied; why should we journey further?"

Yet were our ranks not greatly thinned, because folk from some earlier company of travellers who had fallen out discouraged by the wayside, caught enthusiasm again from sight of us and arose and joined us. Others still, wild and torn — for they had been a long time lost — struggled out of the tangled boscage and joyfully fell in with us; so that we were a great company.

And now, from the stone-bound ridge of a high and windy hill, we paused, looking for some further sign to guide us — none having been discovered this long while; and lo! beyond and below us in a smiling valley we glimpsed a mighty sheet of water glistering in the flooding sunlight. And at that sight the whole company broke into a tumultuous song:

"Glory! Glory! Glory! The glory of the Lord is upon us!"

Whereat with one accord they quickened their paces, so that they verily ran over the ground; the lame leaping, the crippled scrambling in a mad haste to reach that shining margent.

As I stood upon that long-sought shore, a great wonder and awe overcame me, for I looked upon a vast, spirit-circled sea stretching in fair beautitude away, away, into mysterious horizons, farther than eye could fathom.

And so limpid were those waters, so mystical-transparent, so transpierced, depth upon depth, with flickering tongues of light — as 'twere flame and fluid — so irradiate that they seemed capable of shining by themselves of their own radiance. And above them there seemed a sort of evanescent mist, a brooding glory like the sun, yet an incommunicable splendor far beyond the sun — beyond all human imagining.

Then I perceived that all around the shores and far

away as eye could reach there were other companies hasting down to the edge of the waters — strange-appearing and alien peoples, many with dark faces and curious and barbaric dress.

"Who may be these strange folk over beyond?" I cried in amaze to my Sage.

"Those are other races of men, coming also to drink of the Waters," he replied.

"But how could they have come? They were not upon our way."

"Nay; they have come by other religions."

"Surely you mean *paths*, not *religions?*" I contended.

"Religions *are* paths; naught else," he declared. "The Waters of Life are *One*. They are for all peoples, all races, all ages; but each will approach from a different angle—the angle of individual evolution. The special path mattereth nothing; the thing of moment is to come, to come; to find the Waters; to drink of them, and to thirst no more."

Then following my companions I made a cup with my two hands, and scooping up some of the water drank thereof. Much of it drained out of my hands, but of the moiety that remained I found I could swallow only a mouthful. Even this worked in me a wonderful transformation; for it was, as it were, a subtle draught of fire—gentle, yet stimulating —which pervaded every fibre of my being, inducing a warmth, a thrill, a sense of peace and well-being beyond words to render. And I asked my companion:

"How cometh it that I am unable to drink as much as these others?" For I beheld many others who quaffed and quaffed again, and seemed still to be athirst.

"You are new to it and have no training. You have not developed in yourself the unquenchable thirst," he gravely told me.

Then I became aware that those with ewers and great vases were not themselves drinking, but were dipping up the Water and bearing it carefully away; but even as they went it leaked out, draining away through whatever material the vessel might be made of. Whereat in dismay they returned to the shore and refilled their vessels, only to have the accident repeated.

"What are these folk doing? And why do they not drink now?" I asked.

"These folk," said the Sage, "are not inspired by thirst but by avarice. They would bear away the Living Waters and hoard them, doling out the golden fluid drop by drop; but the Waters of Life cannot be hoarded. They must be drunk by each man for himself and made a part of him, there and then."

Now I further beheld that some of the thirsting ones waited only to drink a little, and then—as though blindly—waded out into the water; first to the knees, then to the middle, then striking out with a great plunge into deep water. And the waters swirled about them and seemed to draw them under and they vanished.

Then arose a great cry from those upon the bank.

"The waters have whelmed them and they are lost!" And I lifted up my voice with the rest. But the Sage reproved me:

"O foolish boy, wherefore so lament? These be the God-intoxicated, so filled with divine thirst that naught less than absorption shall suffice them. They are the perfect Souls. They have not lost themselves, but found themselves. Drink again, and look abroad once more."

I did as he bade me, and lo! my vision was as it were deepened and clarified, and I could see that those who had so strangely vanished had not, as seemed, been swept be-

neath the waters, but up into the brooding haze. I could dimly perceive their forms there—the same yet not the same; for that which seemed they, was of a substance so ethereal and unsubstantial that even as I looked they seemed swept away as in an irised glamor and I saw them no more.

And now came to me the greatest experience of all; for my companion, the Sage, who had stood long silent leaning abstractedly upon his staff, now lifted up his face and I saw that it had grown luminous with a strange inward light and joy. Then he flung his staff from him and he too waded out into the waters; first to the knees, then to the middle, and lastly, with a rapturous cry, he plunged headlong into the deep waters and evanished like the others. But, as before, I could perceive that he was not swept under, but as it were lifted out of the waters into the golden mist. For a moment I beheld his form there, but so enlarged, so transfigured that I scarce recognized it. And even as I gazed, it became more and more sublimated and was withdrawn beyond the ranges of my vision.

I was left upon the shore, and a great, great loneliness fell upon my spirit. . . .

I have plucked boughs from the boscage of the hillsides and built me a wattled hut beside the Shining Waters, that I may pass my life anear them and develop the unquenchable thirst. When the tender mystery of the dawn holds enchanted all things, and again at eve, when the skies are transfigured with beckoning glories, I drink of that living draught, drinking ever deeper and deeper. For my prayer is that some time I may get my whole being so saturate with that divinest fire that I too shall become God-intoxicated, and be able to plunge into the deep waters; and so, losing myself, find myself forevermore.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda is still continuing his work in Los Angeles. Besides the regular Sunday evening lectures and bi-weekly classes given in connection with the Vedanta Centre there, he has delivered a number of lectures elsewhere — at the New Thought Convention in Long Beach and in Los Angeles, at the Buddhist Temple, in Pasadena, and he has likewise been invited to speak in Santa Barbara. A special course of lectures was also arranged for him at Long Beach. Among the subjects named on his circulars we find "Spiritual Awakening," "Life After Death," "Self-Mastery," "The Higher Consciousness," "Spiritual Healing," "Creative Power of Thought," "Secret of Happiness," and "Reincarnation and Evolution." Since his arrival in Los Angeles, the work has been gaining steadily in numbers and in enthusiasm, which has made it difficult for the Swami to fix a date for his return to Boston; but he is expecting to start on his homeward journey before long.

There was no abatement in either interest or activity at the Centre in Boston during the month of May. Each Sunday brought a large attendance to the regular morning Service and the number of strangers present seemed to testify to a growing recognition of the value of the Vedanta teaching. The classes were also well attended. At the Tuesday Evening Class, which is open to the public, the Svetasvatara-Upanishad was the subject of study; while at the Student's Class on Thursday the Narada Bhakti-Sutras served as the basis for a course of practical Talks on the devotional life. All meetings will continue through June as heretofore.

We urgently request our subscribers to notify us promptly of any change of address during the summer.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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NOTICE: We beg to remind our subscribers that no number of the magazine will appear in August or September.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE LIGHT WITHIN

By Swami Paramananda.

The object of spiritual devotion is to keep the lamp of our inner life burning brightly. Just as an ordinary lamp requires constant refilling that it may not go out, so we must feed the flame of our spiritual life by the faithful practice of devotion. If we have not the habit of such practice, the light is quickly extinguished. For this reason we are asked to have fixed hours for devotional practice; because habitual practice alone will keep it burning. It is present in every Soul, but in some it is more apparent than in others. In the truly great ones it burns with steady glowing flame. It is indeed this light of the Soul shining through them which makes them great.

There come moments, however, in every life when the inner spiritual lamp seems almost extinguished. We feel doubting, helpless. At such times the only way we can revive and sustain it is by conscious communion with its Source. Actually this light has no limit except that which we put upon it by our own thoughts and actions. When we remove these self-created limitations, we find that at once it gains in power and we no longer feel ourselves in darkness. We must strive, therefore, to make God a reality and learn to sustain this light within that it may never grow dim.

First we must trust in the Divine. We must believe God to be more potent than material things and we must be willing to give ourselves to Him. But we cannot do this in a half-hearted way. We must give ourselves wholly; and when we do this, our trust grows. It is our scatteredness and complexity which make spiritual things appear so unattainable. To the simple heart they seem near and easy of access. Perfect trust, however, cannot rest on hearsay. What others tell us of God can never give us unshakable faith. We must prove Him for ourselves. But before we reach that point, we need perseverance and patience; for we shall have to cross over many obstacles. If we show any faint-heartedness or weakness, we cannot attain the highest. When, however, we are determined to go on with our spiritual life and resolutely trust in God for guidance, He sees our effort and comes to our aid.

It does not matter how many times we fail, we must still push on. Some people become frightened at once and are thrown off their path because they meet with a little opposition. But in reality opposition is a great blessing, because it fortifies our character. If we cannot stand a little jar, how can we strengthen our will? That man is a strong man who can go through all the calamities of life unmoved. Anyone can be carried away by a little joy or a little sorrow, but he who meets all things with perfect calmness has a finer element in his heart. When we learn to base the whole structure of our life on the rock of Truth, it does not matter what our conditions are; but it does matter very much that we remain loyal and ever-devoted to the great Cosmic Spirit. If we do not, we are cut off from the Source. If, on the contrary, we are firm in our devotion and pass through every test unshaken, then the light will shine brightly in us.

God is never partial. His mercy and grace are constantly upon us, but we do not know how to retain them. They fall away, like the rain water that flows off a steep hillside. Only the lowly, trusting heart is able to retain the grace of God. Whenever we grow disturbed and begin to feel the injustice and misery of the world, we must always look within for the cause. When there is joy there, all the world will seem full of joy. The only salvation to be found is in our own inner being. There alone shall we find the light, as we live close to the heart of God.

One of the signs of spiritual growth is independence of external things. He who has true spiritual gifts maintains his independence no matter with what he is surrounded. The tendency of the worldly mind is to look first to material comforts; while the wise men make it their first effort to establish themselves in spiritual things. They never make the sacrifice of spirit for matter. We betray our habit of life and our attitude of mind by this,—whether we give the greatest importance in our daily living to matter or to spirit.

Whole-hearted desire forms the basis of all devotion. We must have single-hearted longing for our Ideal or we cannot be devoted. Yet what is now only on the surface can be increased and strengthened. At present with the majority of us the spiritual plane seems vague, because we have not made the effort to acquaint ourselves with it; but when we lay hold of the spiritual faculty within us and begin to cultivate that, then the things of the spirit become real to us. Spiritual powers are as subject to culture as intellectual or physical powers. They can be developed so as to take a vital place in our life. It depends upon our mental attitude. Make God a reality and the whole life becomes consecrated. When we live in touch with the

Supreme Cosmic Being, our power is renewed every hour.

Let us then lift our hearts beyond these limited conceptions of life, that they may breathe freely in the infinite expanse of God. Let us dedicate our thoughts and all our conscious and unconscious activities to Him; for when they are dedicated to the Highest, they transcend all limitations. Let us try to make our heart and mind receptive, and silence this constant play of ego which creates so much unrest in us. Let us surrender all our powers to the Great Power which abides within us and which should rule us at every moment of our existence. If we can do this, then we may be sure that that light which is a part of the Great Light will shine in us and drive away all darkness.

Our spiritual pursuits, when looked upon from the worldly point of view, often appear indefinite and lacking in direct evidence and we begin to doubt. But this attitude will make it more difficult to get any clear perception of Truth; for whatever we undertake with sceptical attitude will not carry us far. It is like rowing a boat without pulling up the anchor. Before we begin our higher quest, we must make the channel perfectly clear. Frequently we work on one side and leave another side unprotected. The story is told of a man who labored the whole day to water his orchard; but when the evening came, he discovered that all the water he had pumped out had run off into two big holes and his orchard was as dry as before. So, often, while we think we are laboring for spiritual things, at some point the channel is blocked and we fail to derive the benefit we expect. If we have any hard or hateful thoughts towards anyone, no matter how many prayers we may say before our altar, it is impossible for any blessing to flow to us.

Our spiritual devotion must come from the whole heart. It is not enough to give our prayers to God, we must also

give our thoughts and actions. Our entire study is for this —to quicken us, so that we may handle all our forces consciously and direct them into higher channels. We cannot possibly stop thinking or acting; we shall continue to think and act and perform our duties, but we shall do it with a different point of view. All our activities and thoughts will be consecrated and actuated by the Higher Power which abides within us.

We must take the same thought for our spiritual welfare as we do now for our material welfare. The concern we feel at present as to what we shall have for our body tomorrow or the day after, the same concern we must feel as to what we shall have for our Soul. We must cultivate a genuine fervor, an intense yearning for spiritual things. When our devotion is truly sincere, it will generate a great power; and through this we shall lift ourselves and unite ourselves with God. We must, however, first root out from the mind the false conception which makes us believe that our bodily life is the greater reality and that our material needs are of foremost importance. These ideas will fall away when we come to know the bigger facts of Nature; and when we come to know the biggest fact of all, we cannot help but drop all littleness and selfishness. Then a sense of true spiritual consecration will rise spontaneously from the innermost recesses of our being.

At every hour we must strive consciously and unconsciously. You may say, How can we strive unconsciously? If we strive earnestly through our conscious hours, then in the unconscious hours our heart and mind will refuse to do anything unworthy. Thus at last our whole being will become attuned to the Supreme. We shall realize that we have come here, not to work out our own selfish ends, but to fulfill the will of God. Then all the baser instincts of

our nature will be destroyed and the light within will shine in its full glory.

PRAYER

O Thou who art the Soul of our souls, the Light of all lights, the Ever-living and Unchanging One!
Our words of supplication, our prayers and thoughts go to Thee.
Manifest Thy immeasurable Glory to us.
In all humility and surrender we offer unto Thee our devotion.
Kindle within us a greater yearning to dedicate ourselves to the Highest.
We pray Thee to give us ever greater strength and wisdom.
Fill our hearts with compassion and the spirit of peace.
May peace abide in us and all love;
For by the bonds of love are we united with all thy children,
And with Thee who art the storehouse of Infinite Love.

THE CHAPLET OF ROSES.

A Miracle of Our Lady

(Free Rendering of a Mediaeval Mary-legend)

There was a young monk, of the Order of Saint Benedict, who cherished in his heart a burning devotion for the most Glorious Virgin Mary. As a lover might serve an earthly mistress, so did this youthful friar spend himself for his Lady of the Heavens. That he might worship Her the more fervently, he kept in his cell a fair image of Her; and each day, as he prayed, he would weave for Her a chaplet of deep red roses and make offering of it at Her feet. With such ardor and heat of supplication did he repeat his rosary that, it is said, the Holy Virgin wrought a strange miracle and, entering into the sacred statue, She daily bowed Her head that he might place thereon his

fragrant rosey crown. At this his heart flamed with new passion, which again lent new ardor to his prayers. Thus the summer went by in an ecstasy of communion and adoration.

But the time of blossoming passed, the rose trees in the monastery garden stood bare, and the monk's heart too grew sere and saddened as he gazed upon his Lady, without garland and devoid of life. The Abbot, observing the cloud of melancholy upon his face, called the young brother to him and commanded him in holy obedience to make known the cause of his sorrow. The youth, being submissive and frank of nature, confessed to his Superior his passion for the image of the Lady Saint Mary in his cell and how now his heart languished because She had ceased to show him favor. Nor knew he how to please Her, since he could no longer make a chaplet for Her sacred head.

Then the Abbot admonished him in these words: "Winter and summer both come by the will of God, and each season has its own manner of service. You may no longer weave a chaplet of fair roses; but in its stead make a crown of five and twenty *Ave Marias* and offer that daily to the All-Glorious Mother of our Lord. No flowers are sweeter to Her than the prayers of Her faithful children."

The friar returned light-hearted to his cell; and as he was bade, each day he repeated five and twenty times the *Ave Maria,* kneeling devoutly before the image of his Celestial Lady. And behold! as he said over the familiar words, in the hands of the Virgin appeared each time a rose, and for Herself She wove the crown to place upon Her gentle head, bent tenderly towards him. A new and wondrous radiance entered the heart of the humble loving brother, and winter became to him as joyous as the summer.

But it so happened that out in the world there still

lived the mother and father of this young monk and a great desire rose in him to know something of their well-being. Therefore he sought and gained permission of his Abbot to journey to his home for a brief period. The thought of reunion with his parents so seized upon his mind that he forgot all else; and when the day of departure came, he set forth without repeating the five and twenty *Ave Marias* before his Blessed Lady.

Of a sudden, however, at the hour of Prime the remembrance of his broken faith came upon him. Yearning to make amends for his great sin, he begged the brother monk who journeyed with him to proceed on the way and leave him solitary for a little while. Then he went apart into a field and, throwing himself upon the ground, he cried out in humility and contrition beseeching his Merciful Lady to grant pardon for his sore neglect. Again and again he implored Her, weeping bitterly as he prayed. Then with deeper fervor than ever in his cell, he said over five and twenty times the *Ave Maria,* as commanded by the Abbot.

His companion, the while growing uneasy as he saw not his brother following after, turned back along the road to enquire the reason for his long delay. But when he had proceeded a short distance only, he checked his steps amazed; for there in the field he saw the figure of a lovely Lady and about her a company of angels and virgins wearing crowns of shining jewels. Only the Lady's head was bare. And though a bitter wind was blowing and the countryside all round was brown and barren, it being the winter time, yet the Gracious Lady was weaving a chaplet of most sweet and perfect roses, which when She had finished it, She placed upon Her head as a crown. Then all the virgins and holy angels bowed before Her, singing joyously the *Ave Maria.*

Beholding this fair vision, the monk hastened to the spot and found his brother kneeling in rapt contemplation, but the Lady was gone. Then knowing that he had gazed on holy things, he told what he had beheld, and the other one confessed to his brother his grievous fault—how he had forgotten to worship the image of the Blessed Virgin in his cell before starting on his journey, how he had wept tears of lowly penitence in the field by the roadside, and how in Her Divine Mercy the Queen of Heaven had deigned to comfort and absolve him. Then the two brothers went forward on their way, "full of rejoicing, their hearts being uplifted by thanksgiving and celestial love, and singing sweet praises to that Virgin Mother,

Virgo clemens!
Mater Amabiles!
Regina sacratissimi Rosarii!"

Disciple: O where is this naked ground of the Soul void of all self? And how shall I come at the hidden centre, where God dwelleth, and not man? Tell me plainly, loving Sir, where it is; and how it is to be found of me, and entered into?

Master: There where the Soul has slain its own will and willeth no more anything as from itself.

Disciple: But how shall I comprehend it?

Master: If thou goest about to comprehend it, then it will fly away from thee; but if thou dost surrender thyself wholly up to it, then it will abide with thee and become the Life of thy life and be natural to thee. — *Jacob Boehme.*

Attainment comes only by means of this sincere, spontaneous, and entire surrender of yourself and all things. Only with the annihilation of selfhood comes the fulfilment of love. — *Dionysius the Areopagite.*

DEVELOPMENT OF THE WILL

Lecture by Sister Devamata.

According to the cosmology of Vedanta, one force works throughout Nature, one substance is worked upon. These two primordial elements, called in Sanskrit *Prana* and *Akasa*, lie at the base of all created things. Wherever there is any manifestation of energy, whether objective or subjective, exterior or interior, it must be an expression of this *Prana*; and in the largest sense every act of *Prana* is an act of will, either individual or universal. But although this force is one and homogeneous, it appears under many different aspects because of the varying degrees of density or subtlety of the *Akasa* on which it plays. Taking the human organism for example, we see it acting on the subconscious plane in the reflex motions of the muscles, the beating of the heart, the pumping of the lungs, in all the automatic processes of physical life. On the conscious plane it manifests itself as sense-perception, reason, discrimination, moral choice and the diverse reflex acts of will springing out of these. In the superconscious realm it shows itself as direct vision, illumination and intuitive volition.

When we carefully observe its operations on these three planes, we find that it appears feeblest on the middle plane. In its subconscious aspect there is a certain dependable precision and determination about its methods. Granted normal conditions, it works with much the same mechanical, unerring exactitude as do the lower animals when performing their habitual tasks. Little conscious reasoning or direction is required for the functional activities of the body. On the superconscious plane elaborate processes of reason are still less necessary, because man moves by sight, not by inference, and there is no occasion for cal-

culation or delay. The conscious realm alone seems to be the area of indecision, tardy volition, frequent blundering and waste. Apparently as the will becomes more peculiarly our own, it wanes in power. Why should this be?

We must bear in mind that the basic force of *Prana* is one always. If existing conditions permit it to work as a unit, it is effective. When any element enters in to divide it, it is immediately weakened. The self-conscious or human plane is the plane of duality. Man always sees two—the self and the not-self. These two ever-present factors create a continuous division in his mental outlook. As human beings we are confronted at each moment by a relentless act of choice. An event occurs calling for a decision. At once two or more lines of action present themselves for our consideration. We compare and reason, weigh and measure, then weigh and measure again, exhausting all our energy in a perplexing, see-sawing calculation, until at last when we come to a decision, no force remains for the final act of volition and we fall short. "The good we would, we do not," because our whole store of vital energy has gone in the preliminary process.

The root of this indecision and abortive action, however, lies less in the diversity confronting us on the outside, than in the play of duality within, born of a twofold standard of measurement. We cannot be wholly selfish, nor yet wholly unselfish. We consider the question at issue, first from the material angle of advantage, then from the moral angle of virtue. At one moment we give ear to the loud voice of public opinion; at the next we listen to the still small voice of conscience. An impulse rises and drives us in one direction; then suddenly a half-formed, spectral Ideal stands in our way and warns us back. As we thus consider and vacillate, the possible benefits and

disadvantages of either course of action multiply in our mind, until we find ourselves turning dizzily in a whirl of indecision regarding perhaps the veriest trifle, which should have been settled and dismissed from our thought an instant after its inception.

The first step towards correcting this weakness is to unify our standard and establish a single point of appeal. When we have done this, we shall soon find it easy to focus our energies; and clearly defined acts of volition will result. Desire is the most potent factor in accomplishing this. Desire, indeed, lies at the very root of will. "As is a man's desire, so is his will," it is said in the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad. Whenever we have a dominating desire or purpose, that focalizes the *Prana* and generates a strong driving-power; but only as this becomes continuous, does the will develop. Impulsive people are those who are swayed by changing desires and focus their energy in puffs. As a result they move fitfully, like a sailing-craft before a squally wind. But this kind of will accomplishes little, because it invariably reacts into periods of inertia. Also it involves great waste; for frequent stopping and starting are as wearing for the mechanism of the will as for electric motors and steam engines. When, however, the desire is steadfast, it becomes an impelling force which commands Nature and circumstance. We see it in the body of the athlete, who exercises daily with his whole ambition fixed on gaining physical agility and strength; or in the musician, who labors tirelessly to develop his technique: both focalize the *Prana* to such good purpose that sometimes the most discouraging physical disabilities are overcome.

The same law also applies to the subtle body. The scientific investigator or inventor through a tenacious de-

sire to discover the secrets of Nature, centralizes his energy in his perceptive faculties, until he is able to penetrate far below the surface of things. The learned scholar by zealous study localizes the *Prana* in his memory and organs of intellectual assimilation, and thereby becomes an inexhaustible storehouse of information. The reformer focuses his power on the social or political needs of his time and according to the measure of his strength changes the face of society. Whenever the energy of the organism is focalized and carried forward to a fixed point, we have a manifestation of will. The reverse of this process gives us the explanation of feeble-mindedness. When a person has no fixed ambition or predominating desire, but moves according to the sense impulse of the moment, his *Prana* is never centralized and he is incapable of any sustained act of will. His energies are held together so loosely that he cannot even coordinate his mental impressions or bodily functions. The leakage of *Prana* is incessant and his very physical motions have a peculiar, dangling appearance. To counteract this, definite exercises in volition must be given: some simple task which will focus the attention during lengthening intervals, until the pupil is capable of a spontaneous volitional act.

Everyone, however, who would increase his will power must set for himself some specific exercises of this nature. They are as essential as the practice of technique in music. At no time perhaps in the ordinary routine is the will weaker than at the hour of waking in the morning. Here then is the moment to begin our volitional practice. We should fix a time for rising and hold to it resolutely, whatever may be the arguments of mind and body against it. Often we imagine that a sense of exhaustion or heaviness indicates the need of more sleep; but our headache or langour may

be due, less to lack of vital energy, than to sluggishness in its circulation. It needs to be stimulated. Coddling at such moments is the worst possible thing for us. The person who says to us: "You will feel much better if you get up," is the truer friend. The daily religious practices, our meditation and sacred study, may also become valuable exercises in will if we perform them with unfailing regularity, without regard to our passing feeling. Weariness in well-doing is a grave check to spiritual growth. Only those who pull beyond the stress-point gain in strength. He who lets go and takes hold according to his mood or circumstance advances little. A new habit can never be formed so long as we yield to the old tendency whenever it asserts itself aggressively. Resisting it now and then will not efface it; our effort must be consecutive and diligent.

In reality there is no act of life which cannot be converted into a volitional practice. Being prompt in meeting appointments; keeping strictly to our word even in the most trifling matters; completing what we begin; resolutely following out a course of action when once it has been decided upon; never procrastinating; cultivating directness of line in walking, economy of motion in working, precision and simplicity of expression in talking—all these may seem commonplace and even childish practices, but they serve as excellent five-finger exercises for the will; and if we make use of them, we shall see how rapidly we shall gain in resolution and vigor.

It is not enough, however, to learn to focalize our life-force; we must also provide against its loss. Whoever is striving to develop his will should be constantly watchful not to scatter or waste his energy; otherwise there will be none left to focalize. We do this primarily by the gradual elimination of all non-essential elements from our life. At

present the spaces between the inevitable occupations of our day are filled full of non-vital concerns and activities, which unnecessarily tax our vital force and will-power. As soon as we begin to remove these, we shall experience a fresh accession of strength and quietude. In social economy it is regarded as a reprehensible waste to throw away the real product and run the mill merely for the by-product: to crush all our coal to slack, for instance, or to grind fair slabs of marble into dust. Yet in human life this is the prevailing habit. These little gains and losses, pleasures and pains, victories and defeats, are the mere by-products of existence; yet to them is devoted practically all our energy, while the real product, understanding or knowledge, receives only our chance attention. But Christ told us that we must know the Truth, because only the Truth would make us free. It is towards this above everything then that our volitional power should be directed; not for our own sake alone, but for the sake of the world; because the unenlightened man is always an unproductive member of society.

When we learn to make this ultimate knowledge the ruling purpose of all our activity, the *Prana* or vital energy will become permanently centralized; and there will be no further need for the laborious efforts of choice and volition which now drag upon us and create so many wearisome struggles. The moment that our eye grows single, our being will be full of light; our mental processes will be instantaneous and will terminate automatically in unfaltering acts of will. The swift and effective blow of the angry man may give us some idea of the process; but here the force is centralized by a blind lower instinct. How much mightier must it be when focused and directed by a clear-seeing, higher intuition! We cannot deny that there have been

many masterful human wills, which, gathering momentum from a long-held steadfast aim, have swept aside every obstacle. But do we know of one which has not shattered itself in the end against the mightier Cosmic Will? There is only one way to make our will invincible; that is, to cease to focalize our *Prana* as an isolated factor in the universe. Actually it is an integral part of the Cosmic *Prana*, and operates as such, obedient to the higher command. We are in it, it is not in us. As we move with it, we are mighty; when we strive to bend it to small personal ends, it breaks us.

Can we picture what would become of a wave in the sea if it should say: "Why should I always rise and fall with the ocean? I shall have tidal hours of my own." We know that only as it moves in harmony with the ocean, will it add its thunder to the roar of advancing breakers on the beach. Also only as we link our will with the Supreme Will, shall we share in the power of the one Cosmic Force which impels all things, "making them revolve as if mounted on a machine." This is why all the Illumined Souls who have come to earth to teach mankind have brought the same message,—"Not my will, but Thine." Apart from the Eternal Will, the individual will has no motive power. We may roll a wheel by little pushes of the hand, but it has neither force nor balance; attach it to a locomotive engine and its firm strength becomes tremendous. Yet as a wheel its character and individual usefulness have not been destroyed. Nor will man's will be annihilated through surrender; it will merely take its proper place in the scheme of things and share in the power of the whole. Can we believe that we shall lose by the union, when we look out over the universe and see the working of the Great Will? The human will works sometimes in glory, sometimes in abase-

ment; sometimes in power, as often in weakness; sometimes in wisdom and again in darkest ignorance. But wherever we see the Divine Will in free action, we are awed by the unfailing wisdom and power and glory manifest through It.

Foolish indeed is the man who fears to ally himself with God. He is like an untrained soldier marching to battle alone, instead of behind an all-wise commander fully informed of the devices of the enemy. Until this alliance takes place, we can have no fixed standard of measurement, no final point of appeal, hence no firm basis for thought or action. But when we learn to cast aside our small personal measure of things and move in line with the great cosmic forces, obedient to the cosmic plan, we shall act with the force of the universe behind us, confident and unafraid because we shall know ourselves to be "strong in the Lord and in the knowledge of His might." Then no time or energy will be lost in futile indecisions, regrets and disappointments. Resolution and immediateness will mark our every action; and the motive behind will be purged of all littleness. The hero does not stop to calculate personal safety or advantage. He lives in the realm of the superlative, where comparisons and calculations have no place. "Heroism feels and never reasons, and therefore is always right....It speaks the truth and it is just, generous, hospitable, temperate, scornful of petty calculations and scornful of being scorned." Such are the words of Emerson.

No plan in the world can excel God's plan in beneficence or beauty. Why then try to substitute a lesser plan? Why try to cut our will off from the Universal Will and direct it to second-best ends? All our abortive effort is due to this alone—that we are living and working at odds with the universe. Our will-power at present is used to wage

war against God, to force the hand of destiny; that is why we are so often spent and saddened. If, instead of this, we should utilize our volitional energy to swing our life back into harmony with the cosmic life, the battle would be over; all our life-force would be used to the largest ends; and our will, unified with the Supreme Will, would partake of all Its qualities,—conquering as often by gentleness as by power; moving with swift precision, yet with grave deliberation; working, not for fleeting finite achievement, but to accomplish the Eternal and Perfect Will of God.

A wise and good man submits to Him who administers the whole, as good citizens do to the laws of the commonwealth. This is the way that leads to freedom, this is the only deliverance from slavery, to be able at length to say from the bottom of one's Soul: "Conduct me, Jove, and thou O Destiny, wherever your decrees have fixed my lot. I follow cheerfully, and did I not, wicked and wretched, I must follow still." —*Epictetus.*

THE CHALICE

By G. O. W.

Great Priest I cannot see Thee as Thou art.
Though Thy deep voice across the solemn night
Chants the vast litany of life and death,
Yet is the altar hidden from my sight.

Hast Thou a quenchless taper in the dark?
Some loving acolyte to lift for Thee
A censered heart? or art Thou all alone,
Requiring naught from brief mortality?

I will not question more. Thy ritual
I may not know. Yet if to Thee seem good
To fill Thy cup, break sacrificial bread,
May they be mine, my body and my blood.

LOVE TOWARDS GOD

By Ali Ghazzali

(Persian Moralist and Philosopher, 11th Century)

Human perfection resides in this, that the love of God should conquer a man's heart and possess it wholly; and even if it does not possess it wholly, it should predominate in the heart over the love of all things....The following prayer was taught by the Prophet to his companions: "O God, grant me to love Thee, and to love those who love Thee, and to love whatsoever brings me nearer to Thy love; and make Thy love more precious to me than cold water to the thirsty."

Many claim to love God, but each should examine himself as to the genuineness of the love which he professes. The first test is this: he should not dislike the thought of death, for no friend shrinks from going to see a friend. The second test of sincerity is that a man should be willing to sacrifice his will to God's, should cling to that which brings him nearer to God, and should shun what places him at a distance from God. The fact of man's sinning is no proof that he does not love God at all, but it proves that he does not love him with his whole heart. The saint Fudhail said to a certain man: "If anyone asks you whether you love God, keep silent; for if you say, 'I do not love Him,' you are an infidel; and if you say 'I do,' your deeds contradict you."

The third test is that the remembrance of God should always remain fresh in a man's heart without effort; for what a man loves, he constantly remembers; and if his love is perfect, he never forgets it. The fourth test is: if his love is really strong, he will love all men, for all are God's servants; nay, his love will embrace the whole creation; for he who loves any one, loves the works he composes and his handwriting.

The fifth test is: he will be covetous of retirement and privacy for purposes of devotion; he will long for the approach of the night, so that he may hold intercourse with his Friend without let or hindrance. If he prefers conversation by day and sleep at night to such retirement, then his love is imperfect. God said to David: "Be not too intimate with men; for two kinds of persons are excluded from My presence: those who are earnest in seeking reward and slack when they obtain it, and those who prefer their own thoughts to the remembrance of Me. The sign of My displeasure is that I leave such to themselves." In truth, if the love of God really takes possession of the heart, all other love is excluded. A sixth test is that worship becomes easy. A certain saint said: "During one space of thirty years I performed my night devotions with great difficulty, but during a second space of thirty years they became a delight." When love to God is complete, no joy is equal to the joy of worship.

Yahya Ibn Muaz relates: "I watched Bayazid Bistami at prayer through one entire night. When he had finished he stood up and said: 'O Lord, some of Thy servants have asked and obtained of Thee the power to perform miracles, to walk on the sea, and to fly in the air, but this I do not ask; some have asked and obtained treasures, but these I do not ask.' Then he turned, and, seeing me, said, 'Are you there, Yahya?' I replied, 'Yes.' He asked, 'Since when?' I answered, 'For a long time.' I then asked him to reveal to me some of his spiritual experiences. 'I will reveal,' he answered, 'what is lawful to tell you. The Almighty showed me His kingdom, from its loftiest to its lowest; He raised me above the throne and the seat and all the seven heavens. Then He said, "Ask of me whatsoever thing thou desirest." I answered, "Lord! I wish for noth-

ing beside Thee." "Verily," He said, "thou art My servant."

On another occasion Bayazid said: "Were God to offer thee the intimacy with Himself of Abraham, the power in prayer of Moses, the spirituality of Jesus, yet keep thy face directed to Him only, for He has treasures surpassing even these." One day a friend said to him: "For thirty years I have fasted by day and prayed by night and have found none of that spiritual joy of which thou speakest." Bayazid answered: "If you fasted and prayed for three hundred years, you would never find it." "How is that?" asked the other. "Because," said Bayazid, "your selfishness is acting as a veil between you and God." "Tell me, then, the cure." "It is a cure which you cannot carry out." However, as his friend pressed him to reveal it, Bayazid said: "Go to the nearest barber and have your beard shaved; strip yourself of your clothes, with the exception of a girdle around your loins. Take a horse's nose-bag full of walnuts, hang it round your neck, go into the bazaar and cry out, 'Any boy who gives me a slap on the nape of the neck shall have a walnut.' Then, in this manner, go where the Cadi and the doctors of the law are sitting." "Bless my soul!" said his friend, "I really can't do that; do suggest some other remedy." "This is the indispensable preliminary to a cure," answered Bayazid; "but, as I told you, you are incurable."

The reason Bayazid indicated this method of cure for want of relish in devotion was that his friend was an ambitious seeker after place and honour. Ambition and pride are diseases which can only be cured in some such way. God said unto Jesus, "O Jesus! when I see in My servant's heart pure love for Myself unmixed with any selfish desire concerning this world or the next, I act as guardian over that love." Again, when people asked Jesus, "What is

the highest work of all?" he answered, "To love God and to be resigned to His will." The saint Rabia was once asked whether she loved the Prophet. "The love of the Creator," she said, "has prevented my loving the creature." Ibrahim Ben Adham, in his prayers, said, "O God! In my eyes heaven itself is less than a gnat in comparison with the love of Thee and the joy of Thy remembrance which Thou hast granted me."

SONG OF SUPPLICATION

Paraphrase from Sanskrit of the Saranagati-Gadya by Sri Ramanuja.

(Great Spiritual Teacher of India, 11th Century)

O Supreme Mother of the Universe! I, who have no other refuge, take refuge at Thy Blessed Feet. My own Mother art Thou, and the one sure Refuge for all who have not found a refuge.

To Thee I come, Adorable Consort of Divinity, possessor of all gracious qualities, of form most glorious, perfect and without stain.

To Thy lotus-feet, Divine Protector, I fly for shelter. May I find delight in naught beside Thy service, and may I seek in all things to fulfill Thy holy will.

As I realize the marvel of Thy faultless beauty, may my heart glow with steadfast high devotion; and may my joy in Thee become unbounded. May, too, the light of knowledge flood my mind, and my whole being burn with intensest love for Thee.

To Thee, Who art all-perfect, existent through eternity, shining in glory and of dazzlng charm and loveliness: to Thee I come in supplication.

Deity. Be it as thou wilt! By such all-absorbing love alone canst thou attain!

Devotee. In Thee, Whose nature consists of knowledge infinite and eternal bliss, Who art the storehouse of all blessed qualities; in Thee, Who art changeless, beyond thought, divinely perfect, everlasting and unsurpassed, in Thee I take my refuge.

O Thou Who art possessed of boundless wisdom, strength, dominion, valor, power and glory; Thou Who art again a shoreless Ocean of tender mercy, sweetness and compassion; Who art truthfulness itself, and the essence of courage and generosity; Who art all-knowing, yet all-forgiving; O Thou Who alone hast power to fulfill the longings of Thy devotees; to Thee I come; hear Thou my supplication.

O Ruler of the Heavens! Even the greatest sage cannot define Thy power and splendor, or the wonders of Thy creation, infinite, eternal, matchless and perfect. O Thou for Whom it seems but play to create, support and break this universe, full of joy-giving objects and of beings who enjoy; this universe composed of *Prakriti* (matter), *Purusha* (Soul), and *Kala* (time), ever moving in accord with Thy all-ruling Will;

O Thou, Who desirest Truth alone, who willest Truth and only Truth; Thou who art Supreme and Absolute, the Highest Being, whose dominion is Great Glory; hear Thou my supplication.

In Thee, Who takest not account of the weakness of Thy devotees, but dost offer to all alike shelter and protection; Who removest the sorrows of all who bow to Thee in worship; Who coverest with Thy love those who seek Thee in devotion;

In Thee, to Whom all things are known; Who seest the true nature of all beings; Thou Who dost govern the moving and the unmoving; Who holdest in Thy hand the

dead and the living; upon Whom rests the whole created universe; in Thee I take my refuge.

Source of my life, like unto Whom there can be nothing; Who alone canst fulfill the desires of Thy faithful ones; O Friend of the helpless, Shelter of the homeless, having no other refuge, I take refuge in Thee.

Grant unto me supreme devotion, supreme knowledge and supremest love. And through these may I come to know Thine Eternal Being. Make me Thy servant, finding sole delight in Thy Divine Command. Make me Thine own, lost forever in absorbing love for Thee.

REPORT

Swami Paramananda returned from Los Angeles on June 8th after six weeks of active work at the Vedanta Centre there. He resumed charge of the Services and Classes at the Boston Centre on the 16th and will continue to conduct all the meetings throughout the summer. There will be no interruption in the usual schedule of work. The Thursday Class was suspended, but as many of the students found the interval between Tuesday and Sunday too long, it was reopened and will continue for a time at least. During the month of June a large number of strangers came to the Centre, manifesting great interest and appreciation, and the attendance at all the meetings filled the Chapel. On the 12th of June Sister Devamata was invited to speak on "The Practice of Devotion" at a large Unitarian Conference in Groton, Mass., and this has lead to other similar invitations. The students at the Los Angeles Centre continue to meet regularly twice a week.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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REPORT

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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OCCULTISM AND MYSTICISM

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

"The eyes of my Soul were opened and I beheld the plentitude of God, whereby I did comprehend the whole world both here and beyond the Sea, and the Abyss and all things else; and therein did I behold naught save the Divine power in a manner assuredly indescribable, so that through excess of marvelling the Soul cried with a loud voice, saying: 'This whole world is full of God!' Wherefore did I now comprehend that the world is a small thing; I saw, moreover, that the power of God was above all things and that the whole world was filled with it. Then He said unto me: 'I have shown thee something of My power,' the which I did so well understand that it enabled me better to understand all other things. He said also: 'I have made thee to see something of My power, behold now and see My humility.' Then I was given so deep an insight into the humility of God toward man and all other things, that when my Soul remembered His unspeakable power and comprehended His deep humility it marvelled greatly and did esteem itself as nothing at all." Such are the words of the mediaeval mystic, Angela da Foligno, and they remind us forcibly of the sayings of certain illumined Vedic Seers who exclaimed in the fervor of their spiritual

vision: "Whatsoever exists in this universe is filled with God," with that Absolute One Who is "beyond mind and speech."

The finite mind, however great, can never define the infinitude of God; yet by taking every aspect of manifestation—such as majesty and humility, gentleness and power—we may arrive in some measure at a comprehension of the allness of immeasurable Being. The effort to describe the Indescribable has often led the mystics into extremes and contradictions of language, which, instead of convincing men of the reality of the unseen, have rather made them doubt the sanity of the seer. Or if they have believed but not understood him, they have thrown about his words a veil of mystery which was far from his simple and illumined intent. This has been peculiarly the attitude of the Occident towards the East, and especially towards India. The term occultism, indeed, has become almost a synonym for Hinduism. There is a certain type of mind in the Occident, which without investigating looks upon everything coming from the East as occult and hence to be rejected. In reality, however, the teaching embodied in the ancient Vedic religion reveals the profoundest truths regarding the cosmos and God in the most direct and simple manner. If these spiritual revelations seem mysterious to the undeveloped mind, it is only because they are beyond the range of his vision.

Nor is this true only of the spiritual realm. Wherever there is any unusual manifestation, whether in physics or metaphysics, it is always looked upon at first as strange and esoteric; and people are fearful of it. But when the veil is taken off from our minds; or in other words, when we grow up to the new truth in our understanding, that which once appeared mysterious becomes clear and simple.

Whatever we cannot explain will always be a mystery to us. Take an ignorant man into a chemical laboratory and every experiment will seem to him the working of magic. All nature is full of such mysteries, but they cease to be such when the law is known. God's book is always open to everyone alike, but it is we who lack the openness of heart necessary to read it. The Lord has not limited our sphere, but we limit it by our own narrowness. We shut off certain realms of knowledge and if some one comes and talks of them, we regard him with suspicion because we do not understand. Later, however, we grow to understand and then that realm ceases to be a mystery to us.

The idea of the occult, as conceived in the West, is wholly absent from the pure Vedic teaching. There was no desire on the part of those early Sages to keep anything from the people. If the more advanced instruction was withheld from the ignorant, it was not because they wished to hide knowledge; but because they recognized various grades of mental capacity, and they sought to give each one the presentation of Truth which was suited to his power of comprehension. To put a profound text-book on astronomy or philosophy in the hands of a child would merely strain his mind, not enlighten it. Also to give the truths of Nature to the unworthy would harm both the giver and the one who receives. Christ Himself said: "Cast not your pearls before swine;" and for the same reason the Gita declares: "The wise man should not unsettle the understanding of the ignorant"; in other words, all teaching must be fitted to the development and requirements of the pupil. Great Teachers know how to give according to the need of different Souls. It is really we who determine the degree of teaching we receive by the use or abuse of the knowledge we have. So certain teachings may be withheld from us until we show ourselves fit for them.

The true teacher knows where to place the right teaching just as the artist knows how to place each color in a picture. All my study of spiritual philosophy convinces me more and more that what the wise men try to do is to simplify and give the shortest road to Truth; but our minds being complicated and clouded, we often create mysteries and secrets out of what they tell us. Take for example the parables. In form and language they are symbols of the unseen, but they represent a method of teaching which unless properly interpreted means nothing. Spiritual men are always spontaneous. They speak out of the spontaneous feeling of their heart; but the disciples are sometimes unable to grasp their intention, so they complicate and create mystery. There was once a Yogi who, when he meditated, was constantly disturbed by a cat; so each day before he began his practices he was in the habit of locking up the cat in an adjoining room. This Yogi left behind him a faithful disciple, who wanted to imitate his master in each little detail of life; and believing that the cat had some special esoteric significance in the master's practices, he spent most of his time trying to find a cat, regarding it as an essential factor in his meditation. This is repeated in history again and again, and it arises from the fact that we lay too much stress on the outer form and think too little of its inner significance.

What is mysticism? It is that which brings to us the revelations of the unseen. It forms a vital part of the spiritual life of all peoples. We find mystics among the Hindus, Egyptians, Greeks, Neoplatonists, Mohammedan Sufis, as well as among the Christians. Mystics are those who are endowed with super-sensuous sight, but this has nothing to do with magic or occultism. Truth never hides its face. It never fears the test of science or rational in-

vestigation. Yet physical research cannot always prove the facts of metaphysics. For that we must find a super-science which transcends our ordinary senses, and this science is the province of mysticism. There are two poles of consciousness in our mental sphere which are described thus in one of the Sanskrit Scriptures: "That which is night to all beings, therein the self-subjugated remains awake; and there where all beings are awake, that is night for the knower of Truth." This shows that the spiritual plane, which to the worldly-minded is full of obscurity, to the wise is bright like the daylight; while the sense plane, where ordinary mortals are awake and vitally interested, appears to wise men like dark night, because they realize the fleeting nature of all mundane things. When we awaken our higher intuitive faculties, we discover the source of our existence, hitherto left unexplored; and the discovery of this does away with all perplexities and scepticism, and our whole being is flooded with the light of Truth.

Mysticism is the study of transcendental life. Therefore we must guard ourselves against the blunder of interpreting the terms of mysticism in a literal physical sense. Take for instance the symbolic expression of the third eye, which is supposed to exist in the forehead. If any one should accept it literally and try to find it by dissection, he could never succeed in locating it. It is the eye of the Soul; and as the Soul is not demonstrable by any method of natural science, neither is the Soul's eye. Sri Krishna points out this difference between physical and spiritual vision when he says to Arjuna: "With these eyes of thine thou canst not see the Supreme Lord; therefore I give thee Divine sight." There are finer objects, finer sounds, subtler odors in the cosmic universe than our gross senses are capable of

perceiving; therefore when we read of heavenly visions, of celestial voices, of all the supernatural experiences of the saints or mystics known to us, we must not regard them as mere hallucinations or imaginations. They have a greater reality than the physical world has for the common mind. What Carlyle writes of *The Hero as Prophet* applies equally to the spiritual Seer: "The great Fact of Existence is great to him. Fly as he will, he cannot get out of the awful presence of this Reality. His mind is so made, he is great by that first of all. Fearful and wonderful, real as Life, real as Death, is this Universe to him. Though all men should forget its truth and walk in a vain show, he cannot. .....Direct from the Inner Fact of things he lives, and has to live, in daily communion with that."

The mystic is not content merely to believe, he wants to see. This burning passion for deeper vision leads him on and on, until he perceives things hidden to others. In India the mystic is called a Yogi, which literally means one who has gained union with God. It becomes self-evident that the teaching of one who is thus directly in touch with the spiritual world and has first-hand knowledge of the ultimate facts of life, will necessarily bear the mark of simplicity and directness. Wherever there is an effort to veil the Truth or to mystify, we may be sure that it arises from some ulterior motive or from priestcraft. Unfortunately the so-called occult powers have a great fascination for a certain class of minds; and if someone comes and claims that he can develop these powers, large numbers will flock to hear him. If however, we place ourselves under the influence of such teachers without discrimination, we do so at the peril of our Soul.

We must be watchful whenever anyone pretends to possess unusual powers. Men who are truly endowed with

such powers do not speak of them. It is by their silence and humility that they prove that they possess them. The mystic is a man of God. He has nothing to do with magic. If he seems to exhibit miraculous powers, it is the spontaneous and natural result of the state of God-union in which he lives. His joy and power spring from unbroken exalted communion with this Divine Source; but because ordinary mortals are incapable of comprehending such transcendental Reality, his ways seem to them mysterious and obscure. It will indeed be a happy day for us when our consciousness will be so purified and uplifted that, instead of seeing the diversity and evil of the world, we shall be able to cry out with conviction from the depths of our Soul: "Truly the whole world is full of God."

THE LIFE HID IN GOD

Extracts from Letters of Isaac Penington

(Devout English Quaker, 17th Century)

Then the Soul lies down in peace, dwells in peace, feeds on living nourishment in the green pasture of life, in peace. Then Jerusalem, the building of life in the heart, becomes a quiet habitation, where God and the Soul dwell sweetly together; and there is nothing that hath power in it to disturb, annoy, or make afraid. Why so? Because the Lord God of power is present there, stretcheth out His wings there, is a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night there.

He hath raised up His glorious life in that heart, whereof He is very choice; and He hath also spread a defense over His glory, with which the Soul is so encompassed and defended, that it feels the walls of this city to be salvation, and its gates praise. Oh! cry to the Lord to keep the eye open and the heart single, and the Soul in the true sense and

feeling; that the heavenly voice, which drew you out of the earth, may be daily heard further instructing you, and gathering you more and more up into Him, who is your life.

So, ye that fear the Lord, and love His name, and have tasted of His goodness and powerful salvation, Oh! hate evil! All that His light hath made manifest and drawn you from, Oh! take heed of ever dallying with again. Still wait in everything to feel the motion, guidance, quickening, and sweet, pure, heavenly leading of the Spirit of your Father!

Hath the Lord spoken peace to you, peace which passeth man's understanding and only flows from Him? Hath He given you any proportion of this precious peace? Oh! may He watch over you, and preserve you in that wisdom, in those heavenly instructions, in that heavenly life, Divine power, and holy conversation, wherein ye met with that peace, and wherein alone ye can enjoy and possess it; and keep you out of all manner of sin, lust, and foolishness of the fleshly mind and spirit; for peace is not there.

Be not discouraged because of your Soul's enemies. Are ye troubled with thoughts, fears, doubts, imaginations, reasonings, etc.? Yea, do ye see yet much in you unsubdued to the power of life? Oh! do not fear it; do not look at it, so as to be discouraged by it; but look to Him! look up to the power which is over all their strength; wait for the descendings of the power upon you; abide in faith of the Lord's help, and wait in patience till the Lord arise; and see if His arm do not scatter what yours could not.

So, be still before Him, and in stillness believe in His name; yea, enter not into the hurryings of the enemy, though they fill the Soul; for, there is yet somewhat to which they cannot enter, from whence patience, faith and hope will spring up in you, even in the midst of all that they can do.

Now, Friends, in a sensible waiting and giving up to the Lord, in the daily exercise, by the daily cross to that in you which is not of the life, this work will daily go on; and ye will feel, from the Lord, that which will help, relieve, refresh and satisfy, which neither tongues nor words can utter. And then, as to what may befall us outwardly, in this confused state of things, shall we not trust our tender Father, and rest satisfied in His Will? Are we not engraven in His heart, and on the palms of His hands, and can He forget us in anything He doth? Shall anyone hurt us? Shall anything come between us and our life, between us and His love and tender care over us?

What, though the fig-tree should not blossom, neither there be any fruit in the vine; what, though the labor of the olive should fail, and the fields yield no meat; what, though the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls; may we not for all this rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of our salvation?

And what though the earth be removed and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea; what, though the waters roar and be troubled, and the mountains shake with the swelling thereof; is there not a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God? Is not the joy, the virtue, the life, the sweet refreshment thereof, felt in the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High?

And He that provides inward food for the inward man, inward clothing, inward refreshment; shall He not provide also sufficient for the outward? Yea, shall He not bear up the mind, and be our strength, portion, armor, rock, peace, joy, and full satisfaction, in every condition? For, it is not the condition makes miserable, but the want of Him in the condition. He nourisheth, He preserveth, He upholdeth, with the creatures or without the creatures, as it

pleaseth Him; and he that hath Him, he that is in Him, cannot want.

Hath the spirit of this world content in all that it enjoys? No; it is restless, it is unsatisfied. But can tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword, come between the love of the Father to the child, or the child's rest, content, and delight in His love? And doth not the love, the peace, the rest, the joy felt, swallow up all the bitterness and sorrow of the outward condition?

The just lives by his faith; and he that is in union with the just, lives by the faith of the just, and takes no more care than the lilies, but leaves the care of all to Him to whom it properly belongs, and who hath taken it upon Him; who nourishes, clothes, preserves, and causes the lilies of the field to grow and flourish in beauty and glory: and shall He not much more clothe, nourish, and take care of His own lilies, the heavenly lilies, the lilies of His Garden?

Thus, my dear Friends, let us retire, and dwell in the peace which God breathes, and lie down in the Lamb's patience and stillness, night and day, which nothing can wear out or disturb.

O the conquering faith, the overcoming life and power of the Spirit! We cannot but speak of those things; and cry up the perfect gift and the power of Him, who is not only able to perfect His work in the heart, but delights so to do. .....If thine eye be towards the Lord, He will uphold and strengthen thee and bring thee through all that stands in thy way; manifesting to thee daily more and more the path of holiness, in which the ransomed of the Lord walk, and enabling thee to walk therein. Therefore, watch the thoughts and reasonings which rise in thee, and retire from them, waiting to feel the Holy Spirit and to hear its voice in stillness.

THE PATH OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

By S. E. Waldo

To reach the oneness with Absolute Existence is the end and aim of the teaching of the Vedanta. This Absolute Existence is called Brahman and of It we can only say: *It is.* The term often used in speaking of the Brahman is *Sat-chit-ananda,* meaning Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. This is not a trinity; but means that Existence Absolute *is* Knowledge Absolute, *is* Bliss Absolute, by its very nature. No qualities or attributes can be given to the Brahman, inasmuch as the Absolute transcends all relativity and is "one only without a second."

All that we call the world is really Brahman, because nothing else exists; but we do not see it as it really is, on account of our ignorance. The world we know is not real, nor is it unreal. We may compare it to our view of the sun, as we see it from the earth. With a telescope we see it differently, yet it is the same sun. If we conceive ourselves as gradually travelling towards it, we shall see it apparently changing; until, when we reach it, we shall find it as it really is, and undoubtedly totally unlike the sun it first appeared to be; yet all the time the sun must have remained unchanged and only our point of view has been the varying factor. So it is with this world of ours. No two of us see it just alike, because of the difference in our point of view. In fact, we literally make our own world, each for himself or herself. The suggestion comes from outside, but that is not the world we see. All we know is the reaction from that suggestion, which we ourselves project and which forms the world for us. This statement, though possibly startling when first heard, can readily be verified if we take any object that we say is outside of us and carefully sift out what we really know about it. We shall soon find that

all we are sure of in regard to it is our own impressions thereof, made into a whole on the background of our minds and then objectified and put before us, also by our own minds.

Because all knowledge is within us and not from without, all that any teacher can do for us is to offer the suggestion that will enable us to teach ourselves. The gardener cannot make the plant grow, he can only help it to develop its own nature. By care of the soil, by the proper supply of water and sunshine, and by removing obstructions, the gardener helps the plant to come to perfection. By improper treatment also he may dwarf and retard its growth. So it is with teachers, they too can obstruct, but can never destroy; and they are less likely to hinder development when they understand its nature and seek to draw out or educate, rather than to put in or teach. In seeking to aid spiritual development, the first necessity is to build up, not to destroy; to seek to increase and encourage the good in anyone, not to assail and drive out the evil. The method is not to sweep out the old first before the new can come in; but rather to let the new work its way in gradually, until the old and less desirable elements are replaced by better things. We do not kill the child to produce the man, but the child naturally disappears when the man is full grown.

The first necessity for spiritual progress is that we shall recognize its value and really desire it. This desire may possibly be awakened in us by the words of some particular person, but it is for us to cherish and increase it, until it becomes strong enough to rule our lives and make us struggle to realize our highest aspirations. It is an unfailing spiritual law that with the real desire to progress in the direction of higher things, there never fails to come the help we need, whether in the form of a visible teacher, or in

the equally effective leading of an inner light. What we desire sufficiently we get. The reason why we often think we do not is two-fold. Either the desire is less strong than we imagine, or we look for the result too soon. We are so accustomed to regard this life as our only earthly chance that we have fallen into the habit of believing that what we have not now, we shall never have; and yet with a curious inconsistency we postpone all reward and punishment of the deeds done here to a future life, about which we know little or nothing.

The second necessity for spiritual progress is toleration. In looking round for the way best suited to our needs, we must ever bear in mind that the same rule applies to every man: each must find his own way and not be bound by the way of any other. We must not think, even in the privacy of our own hearts, that our way is better or wiser than that of our neighbor who chooses a different one. We must rid ourselves once and for all of any sense of superiority. Our work is to attend to our own actions and aspirations and stop criticizing what others do. Having then a great desire to get spiritual knowledge, and a loving, harmonious frame of mind in which to set out in quest of it, we must next search for suitable teaching; and finding it, we must first carefully listen to it, then think it out; and lastly, if we accept it, we must give ourselves up to diligently following its precepts. The whole secret of success lies in practising.

Only what we earn really belongs to us. That is why success in reaching spiritual heights depends upon nothing so much as upon constant effort to learn and constant practice of what we already know. It can readily be seen that only when we have set our goal clearly before ourselves, can we make any intelligent effort to reach it. Be-

fore that, we are like men lost in thick woods or a trackless desert without a compass or a guiding star. We wander back and forth, often going over the same place, even in the same footsteps; but we make no progress. Let us all set before us our highest ideal and then earnestly persevere in the attempt to attain it. True, as we approach it, we shall find it ever losing itself in a still higher ideal; but at last we shall reach the end of all our struggles and realize our oneness with the Divine.

Consciously or unconsciously, the goal of the whole universe is freedom. Everything we know, from atom to man, is struggling towards freedom. This desire to be free is the real motive power of saint and sinner alike, and it forms the essence of all religion. Man instinctively feels that there is something beyond the little world he knows, to which he is in some way related, and that upon a harmonious relation with that unknown something depends his true well-being and happiness. Religion is therefore his unceasing effort to transcend his present limitations, to increase his knowledge and his experience until it includes the All. Like captive birds, we flutter and dash ourselves against our prison bars, often too eagerly desiring escape to note the open door to that freedom which we are so madly struggling to attain, an open door always within our reach and always available.

When we understand what freedom really means and that it is a necessity of our very nature, we can set ourselves to work to unclasp the fetters that now bind us: fetters which we ourselves have forged, and which we, in turn, by sheer hard work and strength of will must burst asunder. The various branches of Yoga practice given in the Vedanta are so many avenues of escape; so many implements in our hands to enable us to strike off the shackles

that restrain us; so many open doors to that great Beyond, where we transcend the relative and its bondage and reach that Knowledge Absolute, which itself is Freedom Absolute. We can realize this Absolute in this life in what the Vedanta calls "Samadhi," or the super-conscious state. It is true that while these bodies of ours last we must again return to consciousness, but the world will then be to us like the mirage to one who has ascertained what it is. He still continues to see it, but no longer can it deceive him.

THE RAFT OF WISDOM

Selection from the Mahabharata.

One endued with intelligence should be abstemious in diet and should conquer his senses. Indeed, having subdued both lust and wrath, and having washed away all his sins, he should strive for attaining to Brahman (the Absolute).

The Brahmana (seeker after God), who is endued with intelligence, succeeds in crossing the stream of life that is so difficult to cross, that is so furious and terrible, that has the five senses for its waters, cupidity for its source, and wrath for its mire.

The mighty river of Time, overspread with eddies constituted by the years, having the months for its waves and the seasons for its current, the fortnights for its floating straw and grass, and the rise and fall of the eyelids for its froth, the days and the nights for its water, and desire and lust for its terrible crocodiles, the Vedas and sacrifices for its rafts, and the righteousness of creatures for its islands, and profit and pleasure for its springs, truthfulness of speech and emancipation for its shores, benevolence for the trees that float along it, and the *Yugas* for the lakes along its course;—the mighty river of Time, which has an

origin as inconceivable as that of Brahman itself, is ceaslessly bearing away all beings created by the great Ordainer towards the abode of Yama (Lord of Death).

Persons possessed of wisdom and patience always succeed in crossing this awful river by employing the rafts of knowledge and wisdom. What, however, can senseless fools, destitute of similar rafts, do when thrown into that furious stream?

That only the man of wisdom succeeds in crossing this stream and not he that is unwise, this alone is consistent with reason. The former beholds from a distance the merits and demerits of everything. But the man of unstable and small understanding, whose self is full of desire and cupidity, is always filled with uncertainty. Hence the man destitute of wisdom never succeeds in crossing that river. He also who sits inactive can never pass over it.

The man who has not a raft of wisdom, having to bear the heavy weight of great faults, sinks down. One also who is seized by the crocodile of desire, even if possessed of knowledge, can never make knowledge his raft.

For these reasons the man of wisdom and intelligence should strive to float over the stream of Time without sinking in it. He, indeed, succeeds in keeping himself afloat who attains knowledge of Brahman.

One who is pure in conduct, who is self-restrained and observant of good vows, whose self is under control, and who is possessed of wisdom, certainly succeeds in this and the other world.

That Brahmana who is possessed of fortitude, who is always heedful, who is self-restrained, who is conversant with righteousness, whose self is under control, and who has transcended joy, pride, and wrath, never languishes in grief.

One who is not possessed of clear vision does wrong even when he wishes to do right. Such a person, even when exercising his judgment, performs such acts as partake of the nature of iniquity.

Desiring to do what is right, he does what is wrong. Similarly, desiring to do what is wrong, he does what is right. Such a person is a fool. Not being able to distinguish between the two kinds of acts, he has to undergo repeated rebirths and deaths.

If emancipation be desirable, then knowledge should be acquired. For a person who is borne now up and now down along the stream of Time or life, knowledge is the raft by which he can reach the shore.

Those wise men who have arrived at certain understanding regarding the character of the Soul and of life by the aid of wisdom, are able to assist the ignorant in crossing the stream of Time with the raft of knowledge. They, however, who are ignorant, are unable to save either themselves or others.

He who wishes to obtain superior knowledge, should by the aid of his understanding restrain both speech and mind. He who wishes to have tranquillity, should by the aid of his knowledge restrain his self.

That person who cherishes no desire for earthly objects, who is not unwilling to take what comes, who is dependent on earthly objects only to the extent that is necessary for sustaining life, who is free from cupidity, who has driven off all grief, who has restrained his senses, who performs all necessary acts, who is regardless of personal appearance and attire, whose senses are all collected for devotion to the true objects of life, whose purposes are never left unaccomplished, who bears himself with equal friendliness towards all creatures, who regards a clod of earth and a

lump of gold with an equal eye, who is equally disposed towards friend and foe, who is possessed of patience, who takes praise and blame equally, who is free from longing with respect to all objects of desire, who practises Brahmacharaya (godliness and continence) who is firm and steady in all his vows and observances, who feels no malice or envy towards any creature in the universe—that one is a Yogi who succeeds in winning emancipation.

Borne up and down on life's ocean, he who is capable of meditation seizes the raft of knowledge, and to achieve his emancipation clings to knowledge itself (without reaching out to seize any other support).

It is wisdom which leads to the fruition of all aims. It is wisdom which brings beneficial results. It is by wisdom that the high and the low among beings are distinguished. It is wisdom or knowledge that is the highest refuge of all things.

HINTS ON YOGA

Extract of Lecture by Swami Vivekananda.

According to the Yogis, there are three principle channels; one they call the *Ida,* the other the *Pingala,* and the middle one the *Sushumna,* and all these are inside the spinal column. The *Ida* and the *Pingala,* the right and left, are clusters of nerves; while the middle one, the *Sushumna,* is a hollow canal and not a cluster of nerves. This *Sushumna* is closed, and for the ordinary man is of no use, for he works through the *Ida* and the *Pingala* only. Currents are continually going up and down these nerves, carrying orders all over the body through other nerves running to the different organs of the body.

It is the regulation and the bringing into rhythm of the *Ida* and *Pingala* that is the great object of breathing. But

that itself is nothing. It is only so much air taken into the lungs; except for purifying the blood, it is of no more use. There is nothing occult in the air that we take in with our breath and assimilate, to purify the blood; the action is merely a motion. This motion can be reduced to the unit movement we call *Prana*; and everywhere, all movements are the various manifestations of this *Prana*. This *Prana* is electricity; it is magnetism. It is thrown out by the brain as thought. Everything is *Prana*; it is moving the sun, the moon and the stars.

We say, whatever is in this universe has been projected by the vibration of the *Prana*. The highest result of vibration is thought. If there be any higher, we cannot conceive of it. The nerves, *Ida* and *Pingala*, work through the *Prana*. It is the *Prana* that is moving every part of the body, becoming the different forces. In working we become exhausted because we use up so much *Prana*. The breathing exercises called *Pranayama* bring about regulation of the breathing and rhythmic action of the *Prana*. When the *Prana* is working rhythmatically, everything works properly. When the Yogis get control over their own bodies, if there is any disease in any part, they know that the *Prana* is not rhythmic there and they direct the *Prana* to the affected part until the rhythm is re-established. Just as you can control the *Prana* in your own body, so if you are powerful enough, you can control even from here another man's *Prana* in India. It is all one. There is no break; unity is the law. Physically, psychically, mentally, morally, metaphysically, it is all one. Life is only a vibration. That which vibrates this ocean of ether, vibrates you. Just as in a lake various strata of ice of various degrees of solidity are formed, or as in an ocean of vapour there are various degrees of density, so is this universe an ocean of matter.

It is an ocean of ether, in which we find the sun, moon, stars, and ourselves, in different states of solidity; but the continuity is not broken; it is the same throughout.

Now, when we study metaphysics, we come to know the world is one; the spiritual, the material, the mental, and the world of energy are not separate. It is all one, but seen from different planes of vision. When you think of yourself as a mind, you will forget the body. There is only one thing, that you are; you can see it either as matter or body,—or you can see it as mind or spirit. Birth, life and death are but old superstitions. None was ever born, none will ever die; one changes one's position, that is all.

The whole universe, therefore, is a unit, from whatever standpoint you view it. Just now, to us, this universe is a unit of *Prana* and *Akasha*, force and matter. And mind you, like all other basic principles, this is also self-contradictory. For what is force? That which moves matter. And what is matter? That which is moved by force. It is a see-saw! Some of the fundamentals of our reasoning are most curious, in spite of our boast of science and knowledge. "It is a headache without a head," as the Sanskrit proverb says. This state of things has been called *Maya*. It has neither existence nor non-existence. You cannot call it existence, because that only exists which is beyond time and space, which is self-existent. Yet this world satisfies to a certain degree our idea of existence. Therefore it has an apparent existence.

But there is a real existence in and through everything; and that reality, as it were, is caught in the meshes of time, space and causation. There is the real man, the infinite, the beginningless, the endless, the ever blessed, the ever free. He has been caught in the meshes of time, space and causation. So has everything in this world. The reali-

ty of everything is the same infinite. This is not idealism; it is not that the world does not exist. It has a relative existence, and fulfills all its requirements. But it has no independent existence. It exists because of the Absolute Reality, beyond time, space and causation.

Man is an infinite circle, whose circumference is nowhere, but the centre is located in one spot; and God is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is everywhere. He works through all hands, sees through all eyes, walks on all feet, breathes through all bodies, lives in all life, speaks through every mouth, and thinks through every brain. Man can become like God and acquire control over the whole universe, if he multiplies infinitely his centre of self-consciousness. Consciousness, therefore, is the chief thing to understand. Let us say that there is an infinite line amid darkness. We do not see the line, it lights up its different parts in succession, and all that is left behind becomes dark again. Our consciousness may well be likened to this luminous point. It's past experiences have been replaced by the present, or have become subconscious. We are not aware of their presence in us, but there they are, unconsciously influencing our body and mind. Every movement that is now being made without the help of consciousness was previously conscious. Sufficient impetus has been given to it to work of itself. The great error in all ethical systems, without exception, has been the failure of teaching the means by which man could refrain from doing evil. All the systems of ethics teach: Do not steal! Very good; but why does a man steal? Because all stealing, robbing and other evil actions, as a rule, have become automatic. The task before us is tremendous; and first and foremost, we must seek to control the vast mass of sunken thoughts which have become automatic

with us. The evil is, no doubt, on the conscious plane; but the cause which produced the evil deed was far beyond in the realms of the unconscious, unseen and therefore more potent.

Practical psychology directs first of all its energies in controlling the unconscious, and we know that we can do it. Why? Because we know the cause of the unconscious is the conscious; the unconscious millions of our old conscious thoughts. Old conscious actions become petrified; we do not look at them, do not know them, have forgotten them. But, mind you, if the power of evil is in the conscious, so also is the power of good. We have many things stored in us as in a pocket. We have forgotten them, do not even think of them, and there are many of them rotting, becoming positively dangerous; they come forth the unconscious causes which kill humanity. True psychology would therefore try to bring them under the control of the conscious. The great task is to revive the whole man, as it were, in order to make him the complete master of himself. Even what we call the automatic action of the organs within our bodies, such as the liver, etc., can be made to obey our commands.

This is the first part of the study, the control of the unconscious. The next, is to go beyond the conscious. Just as unconscious work is beneath consciousness, so there is another work which is above consciousness. When this superconscious state is reached, man becomes free and Divine; death becomes immortality, weakness becomes infinite power, and iron bondage becomes liberty. That is the goal, the infinite realm of the superconscious. Everyone without exception, every one of us, can attain to this culmination of Yoga. But it is a stupendous task. If a person wants to attain to this truth, he will have to do some-

thing more than listen to lectures and take a few breathing exercises. Everything lies in the preparation. How long does it take to strike a light? Only a second; but how long it takes to make the candle! How long does it take to eat a dinner? Perhaps half an hour. But hours to prepare the food! We want to strike the light in a second, but we forget that the making of the candle is the chief thing. But though it is so hard to reach the goal, yet even our smallest attempts are not in vain. We know that nothing is lost. In the Gita Arjuna asks Krishna: Those who fail in attaining perfection in Yoga in this life, are they destroyed like the clouds of summer? Krishna replies: Nothing, my son, is lost in this world. Whatever one does, that remains as one's own and if the fruition of Yoga does not come in this life, one takes it up again in the next birth.

Breathing, posture, etc., are no doubt helps in Yoga, but they are merely physical. The great preparations are mental. The first thing necessary is a quiet and peaceable life. If you want to be a Yogi, you must be free and place yourself in circumstances where you are alone and free from all anxiety. He who desires a comfortable life and at the same time wants to realize the Self, is like the fool, who, wanting to cross the river, caught hold of a crocodile, mistaking it for a log of wood. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and everything shall be added unto you." This is the one great duty. Live for an ideal and leave no place in the mind for anything else. Let us put forth our energies to acquire that which never fails—our spiritual perfection. If we have true yearning for realization, we must struggle; and through struggle growth will come.

The greatest help to spiritual life is meditation (*Dhyana*). In meditation we divest ourselves of all material conditions and feel our Divine nature. We do not depend upon any

external help in meditation. The touch of the Soul can paint the brightest colour even in the dingiest places; it can cast a fragrance over the vilest thing; it can make the wicked Divine; and all enmity, all selfishness is effaced. The less the thought of the body the better. For it is the body that drags us down. It is attachment to it, identification with it, which makes us miserable. This is the secret: To think, I am the Spirit and not the body; and the whole of this universe with all its relations, with all its good and all its evil, are but as paintings, scenes on a canvas, of which I am the witness.

REPORT.

For the first time in several years, Swami Paramananda remained in charge of the work at the Boston Centre throughout the summer, conducting two Sunday Services and the week-day classes. There was no decrease at any time in either the attendance or the general activities of the Centre. Many strangers attended the meetings, among whom a certain number have affiliated themselves with the work. The publication department was exceptionally active. A second and revised edition of the Swami's translation of the Bhagavad-Gita was brought out; likewise a fifth edition of "The Path of Devotion," and a second edition of "The Way of Peace and Blessedness," also by him. His three lectures on "Emerson and Vedanta," which appeared in the current volume of the "Message," now collected in one volume, will soon be in print. The chief work of the summer was the preparation of the first volume of the Upanishads, translated and lucidly commentated by the Swami. This will go to press in a few days, and we hope it will be ready before Christmas. Besides these, two reprints of pamphlets and one new pamphlet, "The Development of the Will," by Sister Devamata, have been published.

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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BUILDING OF CHARACTER

By Swami Paramananda

Character survives in the midst of all fleeting things. It is the vital part of man; and even after the body is dissolved, it still endures. Pleasure and pain have an equal share in forming character. Misery plays its part as much as happiness. If we are able to take out of every experience the essential lesson it contains for us, then we are not hurt even by the hardest experience. Life is sometimes like a fiery furnace; it burns. But if we can go through it without being consumed, then the heat of the fire becomes a great purifier. In reality the true part of us cannot be consumed; and when the fire of discipline burns away the impurities, the true part alone remains. So we have to go through many difficulties to bring out the best in us. That which is pleasant to us and that which is unpleasant, both serve to mould our character. Whenever difficulties rise before us, if we do not run away from them, but face them bravely, they cannot fail to prove a benefit. We judge the experiences which come to us, too hastily. When a calamity overtakes us, we regard it as a great misfortune; but often in the end we find it a blessing. The story is told in India of a man who, seeing himself pursued by some wild monkeys in the jungle, began to run. But as he ran,

more and more monkeys joined in the chase; and he was almost breathless with terror, when a man called out to him: "Why are you running away? Of what are you afraid? Turn and face the brutes." The moment he turned, they all fled. So in life; when we face our adversities boldly, they crumble before us.

It is these tests which give us an insight into our character and help us measure our strength. The heart which is filled with true understanding is not overwhelmed by darkness or despair even in the greatest misfortune. There where not the smallest ray of hope seems to penetrate, even there it finds light and cheer. Great Souls do not pray to have the road made easy and smooth; on the contrary, they pray that they may meet with difficulties and obstacles; because they know that as man encounters difficulties and obstacles he gathers strength. They serve as reminders. We turn more towards God when things do not go well; whereas when everything is running smoothly, too often we lose our spiritual point of view. Nor must we think that when life goes wrong, it is a punishment. We need these special lessons, that is why such trials come; and if we accept them cheerfully, our character gains new force. As each condition arises, we must try to meet it calmly and wisely, never letting it disturb our balance. But this is only possible when we have placed ourselves in God's hands.

Character cannot be based on theories. We must make our ideals and convictions an integral part of ourselves. Therefore, living the life is the most important thing in the building of character. We must *be* what we believe. True greatness consists in carrying out our inner convictions independent of the praise or blame of the world. We do right because it is our nature to do right. We love because

we are loving. This is the basis of all true heroism and fearlessness. It is what we find in the lives of such men as Socrates. He was cheerful and unshaken even as he drank the cup of poison. To die meant less to him than to sacrifice his spiritual principles. So it was with Christ, nailed to the cross, but holding with unfaltering steadfastness to the task laid upon Him by His Father in Heaven. It is told also of the Prophet Mohammed that when his uncle urged him to yield to his persecutors and abandon his new religious ideals, he replied: "If they should give me in one hand the sun and in the other the moon, I would not abandon my convictions; for they are dearer to me than life."

It is easier, much easier to be heroic when we have some personal motive, or where there are many to praise us. The thought of gaining fame and glory spurs us on. But he is truly a heroic character who stands by his principle even when he is not noticed by any creature. It is this attitude of mind which lies at the bottom of all true character; and until a man possesses such fearlessness, he cannot progress morally or spiritually, for it is the fundamental factor in the spiritual life. Without it we cannot travel far on the spiritual path. Imagine what the world would be like if everyone were self-possessed and full of lofty courage.

Until we are genuine, we are not happy; nor can we bring happiness to others. Some people have the idea that it does not concern others how we act; but it does concern our fellow-beings vitally. Every thought we think adds to the thought current of the world; every act adds something to the universal condition. When we think it does not matter, we weaken the whole stamina of society. What we say and do has an effect on our own character first, and

then it affects those with whom we come in contact. It is all one world and whatever is done is felt in one central point. Every individual life, however obscure, has a deep cosmic significance; so we must not be impelled by small personal motives. Instead of living for our own selfish gratification or for selfish ambition, we must do each act with an exalted, dedicated point of view.

The first blossom of character is unselfishness. In order to enjoy true happiness we must give up all self-seeking. We are dual in our nature; one part is constantly reaching out towards the physical, the other part is reaching out towards the spiritual. The conflict between the two parts is perpetually going on. When we can sustain the better part, we gain freedom; and until we are free, we are not able to do our work in the world, nor can we be happy. A slave is never truly happy. As long as we are not the masters of our destiny, we go on rising and falling with circumstances. But not so is it with men of strong character. They are never overthrown by any outward condition. Evil does not overcome them; they overcome evil. They stand like towers of strength in the hour of trouble; and because they never think of self, their thoughts and deeds have a far-reaching effect. They are the real helpers of humanity, though their work may be silent and unseen.

Character resides in the subtle body, which is composed of mind, intellect and ego. This body is much less destructible than the physical body, so we must pay greater heed to it. Ordinary people are not conscious of this finer body; but those who seek for higher things devote their chief energy to its unfoldment. If we wish to develop a strong character, we must go within and begin to gather what is unchangeable and imperishable. Think of those who have built up great earthly kingdoms, and put them beside a

Christ or a Buddha. Their kingdoms perished with them, but the influence of Christ and Buddha still lives. God has given us higher powers; therefore we must not follow our lower instinct and be satisfied with mere material ends. As human beings we are endowed with superior faculties and we must try to call out the highest in us. We want our children to be strong; but before we can make them so, we must exhibit the same traits in our own character. Words do not carry weight. We must live what we would teach others. We all like to give; but we must have something before we can give, and this something we must earn. Only when our own life overflows, can we really give anything to our fellow-men.

We must always bear in mind that whatever our heart is attached to, we become that. When we think constantly of the world, we become worldly; when we think of God, we become godly; and when we live wholly in the thought of God, then we destroy the distance btween ourselves and the highest heaven. In reality, there is no distance. We create it by our thought and life. God is always in the background of our being. He is always sustaining us. It is He who is using our hands and feet; it is He who is directing our mind and heart. If we remember this and seek in each act of our day to relate ourselves ever more closely with the Supreme Source of our existence, we cannot fail to become God-like characters.

Our life must be lived thoughtfully. We must strive untiringly to find the great Power, who watches over us and with whom we can establish conscious connection only through sincerity and purity of heart. But it is not easy. Man must work for everything. As he labors for his physical maintenance, so he must work for his spiritual life. We must be careful to leave no flaws in our conduct; to harbor

no envy or jealousy or other impurity in our thought. Our heart must be clean. Also we must have discrimination, that we may distinguish between the material world and the higher realm. Above all we must have a sense of consecration. No human being can stand alone. If he tries, he is sure to fall. But if he stands with God, then he is safe everywhere. The world can never weaken him or drag him down.

There are various types of character, but the highest type comes when there is perfect unity between the Soul and God. Although we may not always realize it, what we value is the real man; and the real man is what makes true character. That which is lasting is to be found in Spirit only; and when we build our character on the foundation of our spiritual nature, then we have something that can never be destroyed.

HYMN OF THE ROBE OF GLORY

By Julia P. Dabney

We are weaving, weaving, weaving—
We are weaving, as we go,
Robes of glory in the Sun,
Robes of glory Spirit-spun;
For we know
That the light we are receiving
Is the glory of the One—
We are weaving, weaving, weaving
Robes of glory in the Sun!

We shall wear them, we shall wear them
In the regions beautiful;
When the veils are torn aside,

And our vision clarified,
Free and full;
Shall with God-like things compare them
In the joy that doth abide:—
We shall wear them, we shall wear them
When the veils are torn aside!

When we turned us and descended
From the Fullness of the Height;—
Clothed ourselves in webs of sense
For our earth-experience;—
All our light
Darkened seemed, and interblended
With phantasmal dreams immense;—
When we turned us and descended
To the realms of flesh and sense.

Orphans were we, in confusion—
Knowing not our heritage—
Following gleams of false allure,
Finding nothing fixed or sure:
Youth and age
Snatching at the earth-illusion
Evanescent and impure:—
Orphans were we, in confusion
Following gleams of false allure.

But again our footsteps turning,
Up the Sacred Way we climb,
Consecrate with coming grace,
To regain our dwelling-place!
For all time
In our hearts the fires are burning

And aglow each upturned face:—
Joyfully we are returning
To our rightful dwelling place!

We have heard the whispered story
We are children of the King,
Serving out an exile day,
Till illusion pass away;
Triumphing
Over all things transitory
When we tread the Shining Way:—
We rehearse the stirring story
As we tread the Shining Way.

We are weaving, weaving, weaving,
We are weaving as we go
Robes of glory in the Sun,
Stainless raiment, Spirit-spun,
For we know
That the light we are receiving
Is the glory of the One!—
We are weaving, weaving, weaving
Robes of glory in the Sun!

He will not behold the Light who attempts to ascend to the vision of the Supreme whilst he is drawn downwards by those things that are an obstacle to the vision; for he does not ascend alone, but brings with him that which separates him from the One; in a word: he is not made one.

—*Plotinus.*

This I say, Brothers—Flesh and blood can have no share in the Kingdom of God, nor can the perishable share the imperishable. —*St. Paul.*

THE TWO POLES OF EXISTENCE

By Swami Ramakrishnananda.

There are two opposite poles in life. What is night to those who cling to this world is day to the wise man; and what is day to the worldly-minded is night to the Sage. What the ordinary man, absorbed in material concerns, regards to be good, the man of spiritual vision sees as bad. What tempts the one, repels the other. That is, their minds are diametrically opposite in their points of view. The man of the world thinks that only in the world can he find happiness. Therefore he is constantly struggling to amass and utilize the good things of this earth. If he sees anyone who is living wholly on the inside, he believes him to be deluded and altogether in the wrong. The Sage, on the contrary, knows that there is no bliss whatever on the outside. He has learned by experience that matter breeds misery and that Spirit breeds happiness.

Mind is not altogether matter, nor is it altogether Spirit. It is a mixture of both; therefore in all our mental impressions and perceptions we must have the combined effect of the two. This is why with the mind we cannot see Spirit; nor can we wholly lose sight of it. Whenever we taste any happiness, we may always be sure it comes from Spirit; while when we are unhappy, we may know that the cause is to be found in matter. This creates a bitter-sweet; and that is what life is. The bitter comes from the material side of our nature, the sweet from the spiritual side. The more the material side predominates over the spiritual, the more miserable must we be; if we would escape from our misery, we must work hard to give a preponderant place to Spirit. In the man of the world the material factor has been cultivated at the expense of the spiritual. In the Sage the spiritual outweighs the material.

The man of the world seeks all his satisfaction in material pleasures and external acquisition; but the Sage has discovered that to go outside is to lose his happiness. He expects all his happiness to come from inside himself; while the worldly man expects it to come from outside himself. The ordinary human being is full of anxieties and troubles; but the man who keeps himself intact within himself, has no anxiety about material things and he can be peaceful. When we open our mind to these worldly worries, each asks us to be mindful of it and no room is left for mindfulness of the Soul. But Wisdom says to us: If you wish to be happy, if you wish to be wise, if you wish to be strong, never let the world take you. The boat may be in the water, but the water must not be in the boat; so we may be in the world, but the world must not be in us. Why should we admit these worldly disturbances inside of us? Why do we allow darkness to enter? Lust, greed and all our disquietudes are generated by lack of true knowledge; and they come when the veil of matter hides the Soul.

If we search at the bottom of all our miseries, we shall find that they are based on our material nature. When Spirit dominates, we may live in the midst of the world, but nothing will disturb us. And why should we let these things affect us? Naked we came from our mother's womb, naked shall we go out of life. We shall not be able to take one bone of our body with us. As a man who works in the government mint may handle thousands of pounds and act like a millionaire; but when he goes out, he is searched lest he take a farthing with him; so the whole world belongs to the Governor of the Universe, and we can bring nothing in when we come, nor can we carry anything away when we go. If we constantly remember this, we shall realize how foolish we are to base all our happiness on bodily pleasures and bodily conditions.

How does the world get inside of us? It enters when we begin to think: "All this is mine." The more we feel the "me" and "mine," the more we take the world inside. The more we cultivate the "not mine," the more will the world be kept outside. This is the secret of overcoming the world. If we want to get rid of anxiety, fear, unrest, there is but one way—develop the spiritual factor in us. The true Sage is not moved by the good and bad of this world; he does not measure his happiness by external conditions, nor does he count his life by the few years he spends in this one body. There was a great Sage, called the hairy Sage because of the number of hairs on his body. He was in the habit of spending a few days under this tree, then a few days under another tree. Once Narada came to him and said: "My dear friend, all Sages have hermitages; why do you not have one?" The hairy Sage replied: "You see, my life is so short, it is not worth while." "Why, are you going to die soon?" Narada asked. "Do you see the number of hairs on my body?" was the Sage's answer; "so many years shall I live."

To him this life was nothing, because his mind was directed towards eternity; and compared with eternity even seventy thousand cycles appear infinitesimally short. When we study Geography, we read of so many mountains and rivers, we feel we cannot even count them all; but when we open a book on Astronomy, all the mountains and rivers vanish and this earth becomes a point without length, breadth or magnitude. In the same way, when we think only of this life, all the concerns of the world seem very important to us; but when we think of eternity, these outer things seem as nothing. This is the reason why it is so difficult for the man of the world and the wise man to understand each other.

Vedanta, however, never teaches us to run away from the world. It says rather: "Do not be a coward and run away. Stay in the world, but in the world be a Sage. If you wish, you may even be a householder, with many cares and occupations, but be a Sage at the same time. Do not give up work. Stay and work in the office of God, this universe, knowing that all is His, not yours. Never forget that this body, this house, all these people who surround you, belong to God. You, also, do not belong to yourself; you belong to God." The one who can feel that he can call nothing his own, that he is truly "poor in spirit," he becomes the richest of men, and in him, we may know, Spirit has triumphed over matter.

Oh Poverty, high Wisdom! to be subject to nothing, and by despising all to possess all created things.

God will not lodge in a narrow heart; and it is as great as thy love. Poverty has so ample a bosom that Deity Itself may lodge there.

Poverty is naught to have and nothing to desire: but all things to possess in the spirit of liberty.

—*Jacopone da Todi.*

Nothing is bitterer than severance from Thee,
Without Thy shelter there is naught but perplexity.
Our worldly goods rob us of our heavenly goods,
Our body rends the garment of our Soul.
Our hands, as it were, prey on our feet;
Without reliance on Thee how can we live?

—*Jallalud-din Rumi.*

What man dwelling on the decaying mortal plane, having approached the undecaying immortal realm, and having known the nature of pleasure produced by material things, would delight in long (earthly) life? —*Katha-Upanishad.*

THE TRUE SAGE

From the Teachings of Chuang Tzu

The prince of Lu, hearing that Yen Ho had attained to Tao (the Divine Way), despatched messengers with presents to open communications. Yen Ho lived in a hovel. He wore clothes of coarse grass, and occupied himself in tending oxen. When the messengers arrived, Yen Ho went out to meet them; whereupon they enquired, "Is this where Yen Ho lives?"

"This is Yen Ho's house," replied the latter.

The messengers then produced the presents; but Yen Ho said, "I fear you have made a mistake. And as you might get into trouble, it would be as well to go back and make sure." This the messengers accordingly did. When they returned, however, there was no trace to be found of Yen Ho. Thus it is that men like Yen Ho hate wealth and power.

Wherefore it has been said that the best part of Tao is for self-culture, the surplus for governing a State, and the dregs for governing the empire. From which we may infer that great deeds of kings and princes are but the leavings of the Sage. For preserving the body and nourishing vitality, they are of no avail. Yet the superior men of today endanger their bodies and throw away their lives in their greed for the things of this world. Is not this pitiable?

The true Sage in all his actions considers the why and the wherefore. But there are those now-a-days who use the pearl of the Prince of Sui to shoot a bird a thousand yards off. And the world of course laughs at them. Why? Because they sacrifice the greater to get the less . . .

Hsu Wu Kuei went to visit the Prince. The latter said, "Living, Sir, up in the hills, and feeding upon berries or

satisfying yourself with leeks, you have long neglected me. Are you now growing old? Or do you hanker after flesh-pots and wine? Or is it that mine is such a well-governed State?"

"I am lowly of birth," replied Hsu Wu Kuei. " I could not venture to eat and drink your Highness' meat and wine. I came to sympathize with your Highness."

"What do you mean?" cried the Prince. "What is there to sympathize about?"

"About your Highness' Soul and body," replied Hsu Wu Kuei.

"Pray explain," said the Prince.

"Nourishment is nourishment to all alike," said Hsu Wu Kuei. "Being high up does not make one high, nor does being low make one low. Your Highness is the ruler of a large State, and you oppress the whole population thereof in order to satisfy your sensualities. But your Soul is not a party to this. The Soul loves harmony and hates disorder. For disorder is a disease. Therefore I came to sympathize. How is it that your Highness alone is suffering?"

"I have long desired to see you," answered the Prince. "I wish to love my people, and by cultivation of duty towards one's neighbor to put an end to war. Can this be done?"

"If your Highness starts from this basis, the result can only be disastrous. Everything that is made good (by calculation) turns out bad. And although your Highness should make charity and duty to one's neighbor, I fear they would be spurious articles. For the inward intention would appear in the outward manifestation. The adoption of a fixed standard would lead to complications. And revolutions within lead to fighting without. Surely your High-

ness would not make a bower into a battlefield, nor a shrine of prayer into a scene of warfare! (The mind).

"Have nothing within which is obstructive of virtue. Seek not to vanquish others in cunning, in plotting, in war. If I slay a whole nation and annex the territory in order to find nourishment for my passions and for myself, irrespective of military skill, wherein does the victory lie? If your Highness will only practise self-discipline, that will be enough. Cultivate the sincerity that is within your breast, so as to be responsive to the conditions of your environment, and be not aggressive. The people will thus escape death (from oppression); and what need then to put an end to war? . . .

Confucious said to Prince Chu: "The sea does not reject the streams which flow eastward into it. Therefore it is immeasurably great. The true Sage folds the universe in his bosom. His good influence benefits all throughout the empire, without respect to persons. Born without rank, he dies without titles. He does not take credit for realities. He does not establish a name. This is to be a great man. A dog is not considered a good dog because he is a good barker. A man is not considered a good man because he is a good talker. How much less in the case of greatness? And if doing great things is not enough to secure greatness, how much less shall it secure virtue?

"In point of greatness, there is nothing to be compared with the universe. Yet what does the universe seek in order to be great?

"He who understands greatness in this sense, seeks nothing, loses nothing, rejects nothing, never suffers injury from without. He takes refuge in his own inexhaustibility. He finds safety in according with his nature. This is the essence of true greatness."

THE SPIRITUAL LESSON OF WAR

By Sister Devamata

War is a human storm, based as wholly on natural law as the fierce flashes of lightning which play across the summer sky. When the passions of men reach a certain density, it must come; just as when the pressure in a volume of gas is increased beyond a given point, an explosion is inevitable. And as the tornado is the culmination of a gradual gathering of certain forces in the upper air; so these cyclones of warfare which sweep over the world are the result of a long accumulation of destructive elements in our social order. We cannot have brutal competition in commerce, shrewd jugglery in diplomacy, ambitious aggression in the national policy, and not have war. Nor can we hope, when the causes lie so deep, to suddenly abolish it at the mere wish of man.

In reality, on the plane of manifested life war always exists. Creation implies duality; and wherever there are two, conflict must arise. Evil will war on good; darkness and light will battle for ascendancy. Emerson acknowledges this in his essay on *Heroism,* when he writes: "Our culture must not omit the arming of the man. Let him hear in season that he is born into the state of war, and that the commonwealth and his own well-being require that he should not go dancing in the weeds of peace, but warned, self-collected, and neither defying nor dreading the thunder, let him take both reputation and life in his hand, and with perfect urbanity dare the gibbet and the mob by the absolute truth of his speech and the rectitude of his behavior."

A similar lesson is taught in the Bhagavad-Gita, when Arjuna refuses to fight the battle for his lost kingdom and Sri Krishna rouses him with the stirring words: "Yield

not to unmanliness; it does not befit thee. Casting off this mean faint-heartedness, arise, O terror of thy foes . . . Looking upon it even from the standpoint of thy moral and religious duty, thou shouldst not waver; for nothing is higher for a Kshatriya (a warrior) than a righteous war. Therefore arise and be resolved to fight." Within the Soul of every living thing there sounds the same determined appeal—a cry to live and not die. What indeed is the instinct of self-preservation in animal and man alike but a call to battle against foes within and without? When has man gained anything anywhere without combat? Religion itself is a perpetual warfare; and every Scripture in the last analysis may be classed as a soldier's manual, telling each one how to fight the good fight for God and his Soul.

On this plane of existence, therefore, the question can never be whether we shall have war, but where the battle will be fought. If all our desires and ambitions are external and material; if in our scale of values things of the body come first and things of the Spirit second, then war too must be external, and the earth must again and again be drenched with blood. Even in the life-time of present generations who can remember a moment when somewhere in the world human beings were not in conflict? Can we hope to wipe out the struggle and leave untouched all the seething causes which lie beneath it? Would we organize a society to check an earthquake? Why suppose then that a peace party can stay a like human unheaval? No; the problem is not one to be handled in groups. Its solution lies deep down in each individual life. The choice lies before each one of us: Shall we fight our own battle against the forces within which make for war; or shall we go on our thoughtless way and some day pay soldiers, perhaps our own son or brother, to fight the culminating battles which

are the natural outcome of our own moral indolence and false standards of living?

How far men had gone on the outside, how external and materialistic was the prevailing point of view, was evidenced at the outbreak of the present war by the universal attitude towards it. People were overwhelmed by the bodily horror of it. They seemed to see only the physical side; and it has been the soldiers themselves returning from the trenches, mere mutilated fragments of humanity, who have taught the world a new and mighty lesson. Perceiving the light in their faces, a light kindled by the joy of self-immolation, people have learned that men who grope their way in outer darkness may see more vividly than those who still have eyes. Or that men who swing along on crutches may possess a greater majesty of bearing than those who run freely on whole limbs. In other words, the world has learned from these simple heroes that man is not a body, he is a Soul; and mangled members cannot destroy his inner sense of wholeness.

If that be so, is it then so dire a calamity to have this gross outer garment of the Spirit torn or even rent in the service of a noble cause? And has the war after all proved such a curse, if in the glare and roar of battle on the fields of France men have awakened to the supreme privilege of sacrifice; or have been lifted into new life by the sudden revelation of a something in them that is deathless? Can anyone indeed claim that conditions which perhaps break the body, but lay bare the Soul, are half so great a menace to the social welfare as those, too often existing at home in times of peace, which deaden the Soul-consciousness and nurture bodily indulgence and material desires? "As we pity the lame and blind, why do not you rather pity those who are blinded and lamed in their superior faculties?" are the wise words of Epictetus.

A man's productive value to the world does not depend upon his hands and feet, but upon his mind and heart and character. And his service should not be measured by the size of his gift, but by its quality—whether it is the highest, holiest thing he has to give. If we sit day after day folding bandages to staunch the bleeding wounds of men in France, and are not struggling to root out from our own hearts that which daily wounds our fellows, we are doing little to assuage the misery of war. And though we may work zealously to bring about a League of Nations, unless at the same time we are laboring with even greater zeal to break down our own narrow prejudices and exchange our petty personal or even racial point of view for a broader cosmic vision, we are contributing nothing towards real world unity.

Each one of us has had his share in bringing about the present universal conflict, and upon each one of us rests the grave responsibility of hastening it to a close. By our own fireside, in our own closet, must it be done, by fighting bravely and to a finish the great inner battle. We must gradually readjust our scale of values and learn what is vital and enduring. It is always for the fleeting and non-essential that man wars. The real things, like the sky, are there, more than enough for all. We have only to open our hearts and take them. If there is need to fight, it will always be against our own lethargy, not any outer foe. When things go wrong, we must teach ourselves to seek the cause at our own door, instead of reeking vengeance on our neighbor. If we rise in wrath, let it be against ourselves, not some other. Let us recognize once for all that our only enemy in all the world is our own ego—that deluding principle within us, which by every cunning device leads us to believe ourselves separate from the whole, with rival interests and contending rights.

Let us outwit it by cultivating a sense of solidarity and sameness. Actually there can be no separateness; for as we cannot take our body out of the great ocean of matter, on which it is a wave; or sever our mind from the universal mind-substance; or cut our life off from the cosmic life; so as human beings we are powerless to disconnect ourselves from the vast ocean of humanity, of which we form a part. Every thought we think, every word we speak, every breath we breathe, reaches out in its influence to the farthest corners of the globe. We are our brother's keeper and he is ours, whether we will or no. We cannot detach ourselves from the universe. We belong to it. All our members, our senses, our mind and heart, belong to it; and we are answerable to the whole for the use we make of them. When a man has gained this larger view of life, he cannot crawl back into a narrow personal shell. It smothers and oppresses him. Personal material aims appear too small. He has a cosmic part to play. His dominating ambition is to put himself into the whole, not to snatch something out of it. Like a good musician in an orchestra, he works for a perfect *ensemble*; he has no selfish desire that his instrument shall drown the sound of any other. When we have thus dropped behind us this haunting sense of "I" and "Me" and "Mine," then we have done our part towards abolishing war. For peace is not a surface quality or condition. It abides down deep in the heart. And it comes, not by legislation or convention, but by the radical transformation of the characters of men.

Love toward a thing eternal and infinite feeds the mind with pure joy, and is wholly free from sorrow; this is to be greatly desired and strenuously sought for.

—*Spinoza.*

THE POWER OF PRINCIPLE

From the Discourses of Epictetus

What are these events which you call great?

Wars and seditions, the destruction of numbers of men, and the overthrow of cities.

And what great matter is there in all this? Nothing. What great matter is there in the death of numbers of oxen, numbers of sheep, or in the burning or pulling down numbers of nests of storks or swallows?

Are these like cases then?

Perfectly like. The bodies of men are destroyed, and the bodies of sheep and oxen. The houses of men are burnt, and the nests of storks. What is there great or dreadful in all this? Pray, show me what difference there is between the house of a man and the nest of a stork, so far as it is a habitation, excepting that houses are built with beams and tiles and bricks, and nests with sticks and clay?

What, then, is a stork and a man a like thing? What do you mean?

With regard to body, extremely like.

Is there no difference, then, between a man and a stork?

Yes, surely; but not in these things.

In what, then?

Inquire, and you will find the difference consists in something else. See whether it be not in acting with discernment; whether it be not in a social disposition; in fidelity, honor, steadiness, judgment.

Where, then, is the great good or evil of man?

Where his difference is. If this is preserved and remains well fortified; and neither honor, fidelity, or judgment is destroyed; then he himself is preserved likewise; but when any of these is lost and demolished, he himself is lost also. In this do all great events consist. Paris, they say, was un-

done, because the Greeks invaded Troy and laid it waste, and his family were slain in battle. By no means; for no one is undone by an action not his own. All that was only laying waste the nests of the storks. But his true undoing was when he lost his modest, faithful, hospitable, and decent character. When was Achilles undone? When Patroclus died? By no means. But when he gave himself up to rage; when he wept over a girl; when he forgot that he came there not to get mistresses, but to fight. This is human undoing; this is the siege; this the overthrow; when right principles are ruined; when these are destroyed . . .

This law hath God ordained, who says: "If you wish for good, receive it from yourself." You say, No; but from another—"Nay; but from yourself." In consequence of this, when a tyrant threatens and sends for me, I say, Against what is your threatening pointed? If he says, "I will chain you"; I answer, It is my hand and foot that you threaten. If he says, "I will cut off your head"; I answer, It is my head that you threaten. If he says, "I will throw you into prison"; I answer, It is the whole of this paltry body that you threaten: and, if he threatens banishment, just the same.

Doth not he threaten you, then?

If I am persuaded that these things are nothing to me, he doth not; but, if I fear any of them, it is me that he threatens. Whom, after all, is it that I fear? The master of what? Of things in my own power? Of these no one is the master. Of things not in my power? And what are these to me?

What, then! do you philosophers teach us a contempt of kings?

By no means. Who of us teaches any one to contend

with them about things of which they have command? Take my body, take my possessions, take my reputation, take those who are about me. If I persuade any one to contend for these things as his own, accuse me with justice.—"Ay, but I would command your principles too."—And who hath given you that power? How can you conquer the principles of another?—By applying terror I will conquer it.—Do not you see that what conquers itself is not conquered by another? And nothing but itself can conquer the choice. Hence, too, the most excellent and equitable law of God, that the better should always prove superior to the worse. Ten are better than one.

To what purpose?

For chaining, killing, dragging where they please; for taking away an estate. Thus ten conquer one in the instance wherein they are better.

In what then are they worse?

When the one hath right principles and the others have not. For can they conquer in this point? How should they? If we were weighed in a scale, must not the heavier outweigh?

But show me that he who hath the worst principles gets the advantage over him who hath the better. You never will show it, nor anything like it; for the law of Nature and of God is this: Let the better be always superior to the worse.

Men are disturbed, not by things, but by the principles and notions which they form concerning things. Death, for instance, is not terrible, else it would have appeared so to Socrates. But the terror consists in our notion of death that it is terrible. When therefore we are hindered, or disturbed, or grieved, let us never impute it to others, but to ourselves; that is, to our own principles.

REPORT

Like all other churches in Boston, with few exceptions, The Vedanta Centre held no services or classes during the first two weeks of October. Services were resumed on Sunday the 20th and Swami Paramananda delivered a peculiarly appropriate address on "Spiritual Optimism." In the course of it he said: The spiritual Ideal cannot be attained in a day. At the outset of our spiritual journey we are more conscious of the obstacles than of the help given us; but if we do not lose faith in God and in our Self as part of God, we shall be able to overcome anything. The hopeful, optimistic spirit is never thwarted, even by the most insurmountable obstacle. Everyone has equal endowment and equal opportunity, and God never fails to help all alike in the measure in which we call upon Him. What we need is spiritual fervor and conviction. That man is a true man who invariably follows the higher impulse within. If we do not give up because we cannot hear God's voice, but still cling to Him in the silence and darkness, striving all the while to reach Him through fervent prayer, He will surely reveal Himself to us. As soon as we know Him and our relation to Him, never again can we be hopeless or joyless.

The same note was carried through the address of the following Sunday on "Sin and Salvation." When a man debases himself and is willing to exchange his Soul for fleeting mundane things; when he loses his higher standards of life and runs after lower material gratifications, then he is guilty of sin, the Swami declared. The nature of sin, he held again, is to contract our vision more and more, until we no longer see God; but if we keep ourselves free from whatever shuts away the Divine, then we shall move through life with a sense of perfect security.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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The Message of the East

DECEMBER 1918

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NOTICE

With the present number THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST completes its eighth volume. We earnestly request all subscribers to renew their subscriptions promptly. That the Message each month carries new strength and inspiration to many hearts is proved by the frequent expressions of appreciation and gratitude which reach us. We hope therefore that all who have learned to value the magazine will do their utmost to lend it their loyal support, not only for their own sake, but for the sake of all who may gain new light and courage through it.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE EXALTED LIFE

By Swami Paramananda

There are many Sacred Writings and Sayings in many different languages, but the same note sounds through all, whether of ancient time or of recent date; for the human heart beats everywhere in the same rhythm. Men may differ and do differ in their human interests and views; but when we are fortunate to catch the deeper note of life, little difference remains; for there in the depths we all live in Him, move in Him and have our being in Him, as St. Paul says.

Spiritual ideals vary and must vary. According to our mental development each of us evolves his own Ideal. Also our conception of God grows as we grow. We make our picture of Divinity according to the degree of our mental penetration. Religion is not in dogmatic beliefs or in philosophic systems. It comes from the Soul. We may begin with very small ideas. Perhaps it is only fear that prompts us to seek God, fear without any element of love or devotion in it. We may have no thought higher than self-preservation. But as we come nearer to God, we transcend this; because we find there is no need to fear. Thus gradually we pass from the more primitive ideals to the loftiest conceptions of God and the spiritual life.

At the outset we may be inclined to dispute and try to uphold our own Ideal by denouncing others; but this exclusive attitude cannot continue when we experience directly the immensity of God. As the bee ceases to buzz when it enters the flower to suck the honey, so we grow silent when we draw close to the Divine realm. The noise of discussion goes on only before we have crossed the threshold. When the heart is transformed by contact with God, it makes little difference whether it is a Christian heart or a Hindu heart; the same universal love and sympathy fill it full. As soon as we give up theory and begin to practise, there comes a broader understanding and we see everything in a new light; but this requires strength—the strength of earnest and sincere devotion.

A simple, prayerful attitude and steadfast devotion help us more in our practical spiritual life than any amount of argument or intellectual study. We can never fathom the Fathomless Being unless He reveals Himself to us; and this revelation comes to us not through any external means, but as the result of our own state of heart and mind. It is not enough to follow some religious form outwardly. This will not bring devotion; our innermost feelings must be offered to God. No loud prayer is necessary; one thing alone is essential—that our prayer come from the depth of our heart. It must be deep and it must be spontaneous.

Also our mind must be free from doubt and despondency. Trustfulness in our attitude towards the Supreme is the saving grace. Without it we may try to fortify ourselves at every point and even imagine ourselves to be invulnerable, yet at some point of weakness we may be struck and overthrown. The safest thing we can do is to cultivate, with all humility and love, a sense of the presence of the Divine. In no other way can we become strong; and we are

always cowards when we lack in spiritual strength. Those who can go through the hardest trials and come out without scepticism, they are the true devotees. We see this manifested in the lives of the great saints; but we too can cultivate the same spirit. We are all children of the one Supreme Being, why should we not all have equal access to Him? We have; but we ourselves block the channel. There are moments when we feel that we can really approach Him and worship Him worthily, then that sense of nearness goes. The aim of the spiritual life is to make those moments constant.

We must never go anywhere without carrying the light of the Ideal in our hand. We must make ourselves so in accord with the Cosmic Being that we can be led absolutely by Him. When we have the sense of actual relationship, we cease to be anxious and fearful. Our greatest security is when we feel that we are with God, and our greatest duty is to keep close to Him. Without a definite spiritual Ideal our life is like a boat tossed by strong winds, often losing its course and unable to hold against the current. Many unexpected things come upon us; and unless we have a firm spiritual conviction, we shall always feel adrift. But when beneath our ordinary consciousness there flows an unbroken consciousness of God, then we are able to meet all conditions bravely.

No life can be complete without happiness, and there can never be any real joy on the outside unless the spirit within is rejoicing. This is the lesson of every religious feast and especially of the birthdays of the Great Saviours. We cannot have the Christmas spirit unless we have joy. The Soul must feel the presence of the Christ within and delight in that presence. It is easy to exchange material gifts; but what is the true gift? Love, forgiveness, toler-

ance, all-embracing sympathy. Christ is born of love, and only as our life becomes filled with the elements of love and light can we be called His followers. These two go together; because love always makes the path clear and throws the light of understanding across it. The Christ spirit is ever living. It rises again and again in our Soul. It never dies except through our ignorance. When we begin to doubt or deny what is most sacred in our life, the reality of God and of our relation to Him, we shut ourselves off from the source of light and cheat ourselves of the greatest blessing.

Every being is a living altar of God; and if we do not feel His presence, we lead a life of blindness and do things which are unworthy of our higher nature. To unite this ordinary external life with the inner spiritual life is the chief aim of all the Great Teachers. Actually God is the nearest of all things, yet we feel a vast difference between Him and ourselves. This is because we make life so complex and attach too much importance to every little experience. But some day our eyes will be opened and we shall see how small is human attainment, even the greatest, compared with the larger realities. Then we shall be ashamed to have dreamed such vacant egotistic dreams and we shall realize the true significance of life.

Religion is the highest activity of man; not formal religion, but true devotional aspiration and actual experiencing. Nothing can stand between us and Godhead except our own self. Often we think there is no light to reveal Him, but in reality we stand in our own light. The shadow is cast by our own ego and selfishness. Worldly wisdom bars our progress. What we need is to put in its place spiritual wisdom; and our spiritual wisdom depends largely on the atmosphere we are able to create by our acts and

thoughts. This is why sometimes we feel the presence of the Deity and sometimes the access is wholly blocked. Our heart must be tranquil and free from unworthy feelings, such as hatred, enmity, anything that creates disturbance.

There is no doubt that the external environment helps also—a holy atmosphere or association with lofty souls; but these cannot really help unless the mind is right. The outer condition we can transcend; but the inner condition is very difficult to transcend, because it deals with our own mind. How hard we have to struggle often to forget something which has disturbed us! For that reason the spiritual life is an inner thing. It is not a matter of books or of study. It is a matter of purifying our thoughts. We must fill our hearts so full of trust and spiritual yearning, that we can go to God as we would go to an earthly mother or father. Those who can thus create a real relation with Him, become like living shrines. Then there is not so much need to go to church, because we carry our own altar and our own holy atmosphere with us. This is the way we make our spiritual Ideal a tangible reality.

The world is changeable; that is the reason why we should establish our life in God, Who never changes or fails. He loves us, not because we love Him, but because His nature is love. And when we can offer our thoughts and prayers and acts to Him, not because we want something of Him, but because we find our joy in Him and long to lose ourselves in Him, then our life will overflow in blessing. To forget ourself wholly in an ecstasy of love, this is the way to learn to love even our enemies. A saint does not love this one because he is pleasing or good, and hate that one because he is unsympathetic or bad. He loves everyone alike. His whole being radiates love. Love alone is the motive power in all his thoughts, words and actions;

feelings of hatred or jealousy or envy are wholly alien to his nature and can find no place in his heart.

The only way to reach this exalted state is by giving all. When we become united with the Storehouse of all blessing, we have no fear of lack and we give freely, asking nothing. We must realize that we are direct descendants of the All-loving One. When our life and thought are in perfect harmony with His higher spiritual laws, then will it be natural to us to depend upon Him and be unceasingly conscious of Him. But this will come only when our whole heart is dedicated with child-like simplicity, humility and devotion to that All-Compassionate Deity.

May He awaken in our hearts such true yearning and earnestness that we may know how to seek and find His Presence within us! May He fill us with His Divine Wisdom, and destroy all our ignorance and selfishness! He alone can give us strength and understanding. He alone can reveal Himself unto us, for by no other light can we perceive Him. He is the one Lord, the one Resting-place of the universe, the one unchanging Reality, the Bestower of all blessings. Let us turn our whole being to Him. Let us lift our thought to Him in constant supplication. Let our prayer be:

O Thou All-effulgent, All-pervading Spirit! Manifest Thy Infinite Glory in our hearts! We seek our rest and refuge in Thee. We seek our strength and inspiration from Thee. Forgive us all our weakness and lead us by the right path. O Thou Infinite Being, embodiment of all love and compassion, fill our hearts with love that knows no hate and a compassion that forgives all things. So mould our life that we may live with Thee and be instruments in Thy hands. Make us worthy by giving us Thy support. Grant unto us Thy loving blessings and keep us ever in peace.

ANCIENT INVOCATIONS AND PRAYERS

BUDDHIST PRAYER

Let all things that breathe—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

Let all creatures everywhere, all spirits, and all who have taken birth—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

Let all women and all men, all Aryans and non-Aryans, all gods and all men, and they that have fallen into lower spheres of life—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

In the East and in the West, in the North and in the South, let all beings that are—without enemies, without obstacles, overcoming sorrow, and attaining cheerfulness—move forward freely, each in his own path!

ZOROASTRIAN PRAYER

I believe Thee to be the best Being of all, the Source of light for the world. Everybody shall choose Thee as the source of light; Thee, Thee, holiest Spirit Mazda! Mayest Thou grant me the Truth and tell me the best to be done.

That I will ask Thee, tell me it right, Thou living God! Who was in the beginning the father and creator of Truth? Who made the sun and stars the way? Who causes the moon to increase and wane, if not Thou?

Tell me good things to perform, the duties which are enjoined by Thyself, Thou Wise One! Those things which are communicated for the welfare of all beings by the Good Mind. What good, intended for the increase of life, is to be had, that may come to me? Instruct me aright in the faith which, being the best of all, may produce every

good thing, by means of words and actions. My heart wishes that I may know Thee, Thou Wise One.

FROM THE CHALDEAN LITURGY

Merciful One, begotten of the universe, Who founds His illustrious seat among living creatures.

Long-suffering Father, full of forgiveness, Whose hands uphold the lives of mankind.

Lord, Thy Divinity is as wide as the heavens and fills the sea with fear. . . .

In heaven who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme.

On earth who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme.

ASSYRIAN INVOCATION

Thou art the Powerful One. Thou art the Life-giver. Thou also art the Prosperer. Merciful One among the gods; eldest Son of Him who made heaven and earth. Lord of heaven and earth, no equal hast Thou. Merciful One, Who the dead to life raiseth.

HINDU PRAYER

O merciful God! I have always been and ever shall be Thy servant, and Thou hast been and ever will be my Lord. Whether Thou art pleased with me or not, I have none to look to except Thee.

There is none who is so patient as Thou in bearing with my shortcomings; and there is none here, O Lord, so unworthy as I of Thy mercy. O Lord of the worlds! I am, as Thou knowest, Thine eternal servant; I belong wholly unto Thee. Of whom then, O Upholder of the universe, shall I be afraid? To whom else shall I look for blessings?

What is impossible to Thee, O Eternal Father, Who art the Lord of all and possessor of all things? What I may ask of Thee counts as nothing compared with what Thou canst grant. O Master of all worlds, Most Merciful One, if Thou art not gracious and kind to me, where can I find a refuge?

Thou art the only Protector of the worlds. Thou art the great Bestower of good. Thou art the All-knowing and the All-kind. Who beside Thee can gratify our desires? Countless are Thy gifts; and equally just art Thou to all. Therefore, O Lord, Ruler of the universe, Possessor of all riches, have mercy upon me.

Knowing that Thou art the Friend of the poor and the distressed, I surrender myself wholly unto Thee. Protect me, O Lord; and bestow on me what Thou deemest fit. Thy will be done, O Lord of the universe. Thou art the Helper of the needy, Thou art the Fountain of all mercy. Thou art the Guide and Friend to all, and the real Support of those in affliction. Therefore, O Lord, I crave Thy Divine mercy; save me that I may not perish in the ocean of this world of birth and death.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Sermon by John Tauler

(A Mystic of Strassburg, 14th Century)

Our Lord says here that the kingdom of God is nigh to us. Yea, the kingdom of God is in us; and St. Paul says, that now is our salvation nearer to us than we believe. Now ye ought to know, first, *how* the kingdom of God is nigh at hand; secondly, *when* the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

We must give earnest heed to take note of all that is contained in these words, "The kingdom of God is nigh at hand." For if I were king and did not know it, I should be no king; but if I were fully convinced that I was a king and if all men deemed me so likewise; and further, if I knew that all men deemed me such, I should be a king, and all the riches of the king would be mine. But if any of these three things were wanting, I could be no king. In

like manner does our blessedness depend upon our perceiving and knowing the Highest Good, which is God Himself.

I have a power in my Soul which enables me to perceive God. I am as certain as that I live that nothing is so near to me as God. He is nearer to me than I am to myself. It is a part of His very essence that He should be nigh and present to me. He is also nigh to a stone or a tree, but they do not know it. If a tree could know God and perceive His presence as the highest of the angels perceives it, the tree would be as blessed as the highest angel. And it is because man is capable of perceiving God and knowing how nigh God is to him, that he is better off than a tree. And he is more blessed or less blessed in the same measure as he is aware of the presence of God. It is not because God is in him and so close to him, and that he hath God, that he is blessed; but because he perceives God's presence and knows and loves Him; and such an one will feel that God's kingdom is nigh at hand.

Often, when I meditate on the kingdom of God, I cannot speak for the greatness thereof. For the kingdom of God, what is it but God Himself with all His riches? The kingdom of God is no small thing. If we think of all the worlds that God could create, that is not the kingdom of God. When the kingdom of God is manifested in a Soul, and she knows it, you need not to preach or to teach; for that Soul is taught of God, and assured of eternal life. He who knows and perceives how nigh God's kingdom is, may say with Jacob: "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

A Master has said: "He knoweth God aright who knoweth Him in all things alike." He who serveth God with fear, it is good; he who serveth Him with love, it is better;

but he who in fear can love, that is the best of all. That a man should have a life of quiet or rest in God is good; that a man should lead a painful life in patience is better; but that a man should have rest in a painful life is best of all. Whether a man walk out in the fields and say his prayers, and feel God's presence, or whether he be in the church and feel God's presence, does he perceive him any the better because he is in a place of rest? If he do, it comes from his own infirmity; the difference is not on God's side; for God is in all things and places alike, and is ever alike ready to give Himself to us, in so far as we are able to receive Him; and he knows God alike who sees Him in all things.

St. Bernard says: "Why does my eye perceive the heavens, and not my feet? Because my eye is more like the heavens than my feet." Thus, if my Soul is to perceive God, it must be heavenly. Now what will bring the Soul to see God in herself and know how nigh God is to her? Consider! The heavens cannot take any imprint from other things; neither can they, by any violence or force, be turned from their order. In like manner, the Soul that would know God must be so grounded and built up in Him, that neither hope, nor fear, nor joy, nor sorrow, nor weal or woe, nor anything else, can so move it as to force it from its place in Him.

Nothing hinders the Soul so much in its knowledge of God as time and place. Time and place are parts, and God is one; therefore, if our Soul is to know God, it must know Him above time and place; for God is neither this nor that, like these complex things around us, for God is one. If the Soul is to see, she must not look at the things that exist in time; for so long as she is looking at time and place, or at the phenomena dependent thereon, she can never

perceive God Himself; just as, if mine eye is to perceive color, it must first be cleared of all tint in itself. I say more: if the Soul is to know God, she must forget herself and lose herself, for while she is looking at and thinking about herself, she is not looking at and thinking about God; but when she loses herself in God and lets go of all things, then she finds herself again in God.

When she comes to know God, then does she know to perfection in Him, both herself and all the things from which she has separated herself. If I am truly to know the Highest Good, or the Eternal Goodness, I must know it in that wherein it is good, namely, in itself,—not in these things in which it is only in part. If I am to know real Being, I must know it in that where it is self-existent, that is, in God. In God alone is the Divine Substance. In one man you have not all humanity, for one man is not all men; but in God the Soul knows all humanity and all things in their ideal, for she knows them in their substance. So I am as certain as that I live and God lives, that if the Soul is to know God, she must know Him above time and space; and such a Soul knows God, and knows how nigh God's kingdom is; that is, God with all His riches.

The masters have set forth many questions in the schools as to how it be possible for the Soul to know God. It is not of God's severity that he requires much from man; it is of His great kindness that he will have the Soul to open herself wider, to be able to receive much, that He may bestow much upon her. Let no one think that is is hard to attain thereunto. Although it sounds hard and is hard at first, as touching the forsaking and dying to all things; yet, when one has reached this state, no life can be easier or sweeter, or fuller of pleasures; for God is right diligent to be with us at all seasons and to teach us, that He may

bring us to Himself when we are like to go astray. None of us ever desired anything more ardently than God desires to bring men to the knowledge of Himself.

God is ever ready, but we are very unready; God is nigh to us, but we are far from Him; God is within, we are without; God is at home, wé are strangers. The Prophet says: "God leadeth the righteous by a narrow path into a broad highway, till they come into a wide and open place;" that is unto the true freedom of that spirit which hath become one spirit with God. God help us all to follow Him, that He may bring us unto Himself! Amen.

LOVING JESUS, CANST THOU BE—

By E. C. Adams

Loving Jesus canst Thou be
Human friend to one like me?
Heart's companion have I none
So must go my way alone
Unless, Jesus, Thou canst bend
Thy dear Head to be my friend.

Nearly all my hours must go
Into toilsome work, and so
I'll not need to trouble Thee
Through the day to comfort me.
But when evening follows day
And the tired mind longs for play,

When the weary heart craves rest
Near the one that loves it best,
Yearning sore for cheer that lies
Warm in answering human eyes,
Then, dear Jesus, canst Thou be
Just a play-time friend to me?

THE NEED OF A MEDIATOR

By Sister Devamata

In all religious aspiration and struggle two clearly-defined aims are apparent:—one, to lift the human into the Divine; the other, to draw the Divine down into the human. The first is the mark of spiritual manhood; the second, of spiritual youth and childhood. Any sense of aloofness chills the child heart and engenders fear and distrust. It longs with an instinctive longing to come into unveiled contact with the hidden Power dimly sensed in the dark beyond; and feeling impotent to travel out into the darkness, it strives age after age to draw that Unseen One down within its reach. Thus it is that invariably we find the awakening of the religious consciousness expressing itself by some attempt to invest Deity with familiar and tangible form.

This, I believe, is the origin of all Nature-worship. It is the effort of man to touch God through the common elements of daily life. Modern thought interprets it as benighted superstition, not considering how keen must be the consciousness of Divinity to be ever mindful of Its presence. How often do we with our boasted enlightenment have any real sense of God as we watch the leaping flame or the growing grain or the bubbling mountain stream? "The world which is now divine only to the gifted, was then divine to whosoever would turn his eye upon it," Carlyle writes in his *Hero-Worship*. "The young generations of the world, who had in them the freshness of children, and yet the depth of earnest men, who did not think they had finished off all things in Heaven and Earth by merely giving them scientific names, but had to gaze direct at them there with awe and wonder; they felt better what of divinity is in man and Nature."

No one ever worshipped Fire or Wind or Water for itself. It was the Nameless Power within them which called forth the invocation or sacrifice: — to propitiate when that Power raged over the earth in flood or storm or conflagration; to adore in childlike wonder when It came in the gentler aspects of the hearth-fire, the sacred river or the fertile furrow. To those early seekers there was nothing strange in the fact that Satyakama should hear the voice in the fire teaching him, as is told in the Chandogya-Upanishad; or that tree and mountain should answer the Sage pursuing his fleeing son, Sukadeva. On every side that Hidden One was calling to them; and wherever the dividing veil seemed thinnest, there they sought to break through and touch the unseen Presence.

As time went on, however, the lonely hearts of men were not content to leave that Power nameless and formless. A name and form seemed to bring It nearer; so the mighty family of gods sprang into existence—sons and daughters of the Great Mother, Nature. Agni, Vayu, Indra, Surya (gods of fire, wind, storm and sun) of the Vedic Aryans: Loke, Aegir, Thor, of the Norsemen: Helios, Hera, Poseidon, Zeus, of the Greeks: Gibil, Ea, Samas (fire, sea and sun gods), of the ancient Chaldeans: all point to a common parentage. But these deities are never more than messengers or intermediaries of a Being beyond. Even in that oldest Scripture, the Rig-Veda, we find an unmistakable recognition of the One, Whose emissaries these Bright Spirits are, dispensing wealth or learning, success or long life, according to the special prayer of the deserving worshipper. They are invariably looked upon as minor aspects of Deity, near enough to the mortal plane to be willing to satisfy mortal desires. "Those who long for success in the world worship the gods," the Bhagavad-Gita

tells us; and Homer says: "All folk yearn after the gods." The Gita adds, however, that whatever the form of Deity man may worship to gain his end, from the Supreme alone comes the satisfaction of his desire.

So long as fear or material gratification—sons, cattle, victory in arms or abundant harvests—furnished the chief impetus to religious effort, Nature and the gods remained the mediators between Divinity and man. But as fear softened into love, and desire for earthly benefactions changed into hunger for spiritual blessing, even these seemed too far removed from the human need. Man's soul cried out for a closer companion—a personal mediator or intercessor. So in every religion there appears the Saviour, who is known as "Redeemer," "Slain One," "Sin-Bearer," "Only-begotten Son," "Anointed One"; by all the names, in fact, which are usually regarded in the Occident as peculiarly Christian. Prometheus was called a "crucified Saviour" and a "Divine Sufferer." Hermes was invoked as the "good Saviour," also Apollo and Aesculapius. On an ancient statue of Bacchus, who is frequently spoken of as Saviour and Redeemer, we read the inscription: "It is I who guides you; it is I who protects you and who saves you; I who am Alpha and Omega." The Persians looked upon Mithras as a "Divine Mediator"; Horus, the Son of Isis, was worshipped as the Divine Saviour of the Egyptians, as was also his father Osiris; while Fo-hi was declared to be a Saviour by the Chinese.

The idea of the *Logos* is equally universal. The Indo-Aryan had it under the form of the *Sabda-Brahman* or "Sound-God." The Chaldeans claimed their *Memra* or "Word of God;" and to the Assyrian the Saviour Marduk was the "Word." An ancient Egyptian record relates how Thulis, a great monarch of Egypt, one day asked the

oracle of Serapis: "Tell me if there was before one greater than I, or will ever be one greater?" To which the oracle made answer: "First God, afterward the Word, and with them the Holy Spirit: all these are of the same nature and make one whole, of which the power is eternal. Go away quickly, mortal, thou who hast but an uncertain life." In early church history again we find the Christian Father, Justin Martyr, asking the Roman Emperor Antoninus Pius why the followers of Jesus should be so persecuted, "considering," he adds, "that you have your Mercury in worship under the title of the Word and Messenger of God." The *Logos* also figures prominently in the philosophical teaching at Alexandria during the last years of the pre-Christian era. Philo, the most eminent of this School, addresses it as a distinct being, calling it "Interpreter of God," "Eternal Bread of Heaven," "Ambassador of God," "Mediator," "Intercessor," "First-Begotten Son of God."

With the Saviour or *Logos* in these more deific forms, however, the line of intercession does not close. Nearer still stand the incarnate Ones, the "Word made flesh"—Krishna, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ; true God-men, radiant with Divinity on the one side, humbly human on the other. It would seem that the effort to humanize the Divine must culminate with these embodied representatives of Godhead; yet in every form of religion the intimacy of relationship is pushed one step further. The Son intercedes with the Father, but the Mother is invoked to intercede with the Son. Thus wherever we find a Saviour proclaimed, with it springs up the adoration of the Virgin Mother. In Egypt the worship of Isis with the child Horus in her arms dates back at least six thousand years; and like the Greek "Virgin Queen of Heaven," Juno, and the Virgin Mary, she was depicted as standing on the crescent moon.

The ancient Scandinavians had their Madonna; and the ancient Germans worshipped a virgin goddess Hertha, who conceived of the "active spirit" and gave birth to a son. In Mexico is to be seen a hieroglyphic showing the annunciation of the Virgin Chimalman, who was told by the ambassador of God that she should become the mother of the Saviour Quetzalcoatl. In Gaul the Druids invoked the *Virgo-Paritura* as the "Mother of God"; while the ancient Muscovites bowed before a sacred family consisting of mother and child with another child standing beside her, as we see John the Baptist beside the Christian Madonna. India, Persia, China, all had their Blessed Virgin Mothers; and everywhere names and customs and dates associated with this worship of Divine Motherhood are strangely identical.

These multiple proofs, however, of the unanimity of human minds, whatever the race or creed, should not weaken our belief in the reality and Divine sanctity of any Saviour or any special form of religious worship. Rather should they make our faith the stronger. In science isolated phenomena contribute little toward the establishment of Truth; it is the continually repeated fact which confirms the law. Why should it be otherwise in religion? If God had come only once and to a portion only of the human race, if the religious consciousness had expressed itself once only in certain forms and symbols, we might doubt the authenticity of the records or the correctness of our interpretation of them. But when the higher needs of man are met again and again and still again in the same way, then we may safely believe that the Mediator is a fundamental fact of life; and that the symbols and prayers and rituals, which reproduce themselves in East and West, North and South, are the natural and spontaneous expres-

sions of religious aspiration among all peoples; just as men everywhere have given expression to their physical needs in closely-related material forms.

The recognition of this fact also may help to stay the iconoclastic spirit of the scientific reformer and image-breaker, who would make religion only for mature minds. The wise spiritual leader is he who recognizes that in the primary grade of the church, as of the school-room, the object lesson is necessary; and the child in spiritual evolution will remain Godless, if he cannot have a God nearly related to his human consciousness. As long as the Supreme Being seems far away, the distance must be filled with mediating manifestations of Divinity; and the greater the distance seems, the longer will grow the line of intercession. Semitic peoples filled it with their angels, archangels and heavenly hosts; the Indo-Aryans with their *devas, ghandarvas,* and *pitris;* Greeks and Romans with their gods, demi-gods and deified heroes.

It is useless to try to clear the space. Sweep away these intervening entities in one form and the human heart will bring them back clothed in new names and forms. Buddha, as we know, preached an impersonal and isolated Deity. His adherents fashioned a concrete God of Him, and to provide a sense of duration, propounded the idea that Boddhisattwas are perpetually taking form. Mohammed turned the eyes of the Sabeans away from their sacred stars and cast out the gods of the Arabs; but his own revelation, he claimed, was received from the angel Gabriel.

Never by creating an empty void between God and man, can we bring the human nearer to the Divine. Theology may decide that no mediatory entities shall stand between, but the human heart will reach its own decision by an inner intuition bred of a far-stretching evolutionary memory. It

sees unbroken continuity throughout Nature; every grade of life manifesting itself in some form; no break anywhere from amoeba up to man. Why should the chain be broken at this midway point, it asks, and the Soul be called upon to take a sudden leap across the wide chasm dividing humanity from Divinity? Let it rather bridge the chasm with any higher mediating influence that may awaken its faith and reverence. Communion with the saints, loyal devotion to an Incarnate Saviour, companionship with the holy of heaven or earth, these are all divinely appointed means by which the yearning heart of man may find the God without and learn to pass to the God within.

THE SIGHT OF THE BLIND

Mediaeval Legend of the Blessed Virgin

In the city of Roc Amadour there was an abbey-church dedicated to Our Lady, which had become a chosen place of pilgrimage because of the miracles wrought therein. At a day's journey thence there lived a gentlewoman, who through a life of vanity and the misuse of her eyes in gazing ever at worldly glitter rather than at God's glory, had been deprived of her sight. Finding herself in darkness, repentance seized upon her heart, and she vowed herself wholly to the Blessed Mary, if only that loving Mother in Her infinite pity would give her back the light.

Counselled by the priest of her township, she determined to make a pilgrimage on foot to the abbey-church at Roc Amadour and at the shrine of the Virgin repeat her vow. With her went a large concourse of her neighbors, grieving that she should be thus afflicted and eager that she might find redress. So together they journeyed, at times right wearily, for the way seemed long, until they reached the hilltop of Mont Joye, where the church of miracles

could first be seen. There they fell upon their knees and all together repeated the *Salve Regina* and *Ave Maria.* When the lady who was blind heard that they were near the end of their pilgrimage, she began to weep bitterly and, throwing herself upon the ground, prayed thus to the All-forgiving Mother:

"Sweet and most piteous Lady! I implore you by your holy name and that of your dear Son, that did show compassion to the blind and healed them, look with mercy on this poor sinner, sad and sore afflicted. I know full well, Most Gracious Mother, that if you will but hear my prayer, I may once more see the light. I entreat you, Blessed Lady, give me back my sight, and I do promise you that from this day I shall vow myself to a holy life and do all things according to your good pleasure."

Scarcely had she spoken these humble words of penitence, when the veil of darkness lifted and she saw more clearly than ever in her life before. Then she began to cry in a joyous voice: "Dear Mother, Queen of Heaven, I see! I see! All glory and thanks be unto you, for I know that by no grace of mine have you thus shown me favor." And with eyes fixed in devout fervor on the distant church of Roc Amadour, she sang: "Levavi oculos meos in montes, unde veniet auxilium" ("I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help").

All the neighbors, seeing the miracle, began to weep for very joy and ran along the way to tell of it to other pilgrims. So did they go, all praising with one accord the Holy Mother of God, who had thus restored sight to the blind. When, however, they reached the door of the church and the gentlewoman thought to enter, she could not cross the threshold; nor could any other, even the strongest, draw her over. So they called the priests, who said that,

though penitent, yet had she not been shriven; and for this reason was she kept without the House of God. So one, wise and zealous, came in his surplice to hear her confession; and she told in deep humility, word for word, all that she had done to gratify the vanity of her heart and accomplish her own pleasure in the world. Then the priest, looking upon her and seeing how comely was she and how great might be her temptation once again to mislead by giving before His altar."

"My dear sister, I fear me that by these fair tresses you have done much hurt to other souls, and they may yet be to you a snare of the enemy. It is meet now that you be rather adorned with modesty and humility. I admonish you, therefore, if you would be absolved of your sins, that you let yourself be shorn of these fair locks and make them an offering at the Blessed Virgin's shrine. Then will you be delivered of all chance to vanity and you will see not only with these eyes of the body, but also with the eyes of the Soul. If you consent to this, then shall you be able to enter God's House and make your act of thanksgiving before His altar.

Fearing lest the blindness might once more come upon her, the gentlewoman submitted, though right unwillingly, to the penance laid upon her. She knew full well that these golden waving tresses were her chief beauty; and as she carried them in her hand to the Holy Virgin's shrine, a secret displeasure rose within her, so that with her prayer was mingled a sense of bitterness that Saint Mary should have sold her favor at the cost of so dear a sacrifice.

Having finished their devotions, the pilgrims set out on their homeward way, singing and giving thanks for the great mercy of the Blessed Mary; but the gentlewoman

joined but coldly in their rejoicings. At Mont Joye again they paused, facing Roc Amadour, and knelt to repeat a last *Ave Maria*, as a loving farewell to Our Lady. But this gentlewoman instead cried in a loud voice:

"Alas, Holy Saint Mary, what have you done to me? I came to you adorned with great beauty, and you have robbed me of what was my dearest treasure. My heart grieves for those tresses that you have taken from me and I return home disconsolate and sorrowful."

As she prayed, behold! there came upon her head the golden curling tresses which had been shorn and laid before the Virgin; but her eyes were blind so that she could not see them. Her neighbors led her home, amazed and wondering. But from that hour prayers and pilgrimages profited her nothing. To the end she remained in darkness; and all who heard her story learned that it availeth little to restore the sight of the eyes when there is blindness in the Soul.

REPORT

During the past month all Services and classes continued as usual at the Centre, except on Tuesday, November 12th, when a thanksgiving Service was substituted for the usual class. After music and meditation the Swami spoke with deep feeling of the reestablishment of peace in the world: "The conflict has ceased," he said, "and what is the lesson we have learned from it? That no one individual or nation can work for its own happiness; that there cannot be such a thing as selfish happiness. We must feel for one another. Only when we do this can we grasp the real import of such moments as the present one. We pay a very great price when we lose the universal point of view, for it alone gives a death blow to all self-seeking. When both in the small

and the large facts of life we are able to forget ourselves completely, then whatever we do must prove constructive and fruitful. The soldiers have taught us how to transcend the little things of life. But these transcendent experiences do not come in one way only, and they never come so long as we cherish selfish desires.

"Rejoicing is good, but we must remember that there is no true joy unless our heart is free from hatred. We must never lose our spiritual point of view. In days of sorrow it is natural for us to turn to God, but we must turn to Him with great fervor in days of rejoicing. Indeed, we must pray even more in the hour of joy, that we may keep our balance and hold fast to our Ideal. A time of many changes lies before us. Small groups of people and nations are to be broken apart in order that the world may have a larger feeling and all men work together in a common cause. We must prepare ourselves, then when the hour strikes we shall not fail to do our part. When we have bigger ideals and live in a bigger way, we must also be ready to make bigger sacrifices. We must not be satisfied to live in the same narrow circle. The world is growing and if we do not grow with it, we must suffer. As it outgrows certain things, we too must expand our vision and adapt ourselves to the new conditions. Let us merge our little selfish happiness in a bigger happiness; and when we pray, let our prayer be, not for ourselves, but for all living beings."

There was another special Service on Thanksgiving evening at which the Swami in his address once again expressed deep gratitude for the blessing of returning peace; a peace which, he prayed, might prove lasting and mark the beginning of an era of greater unity and brotherhood among all the peoples of the earth.

The Swami will remain in Boston through December.

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